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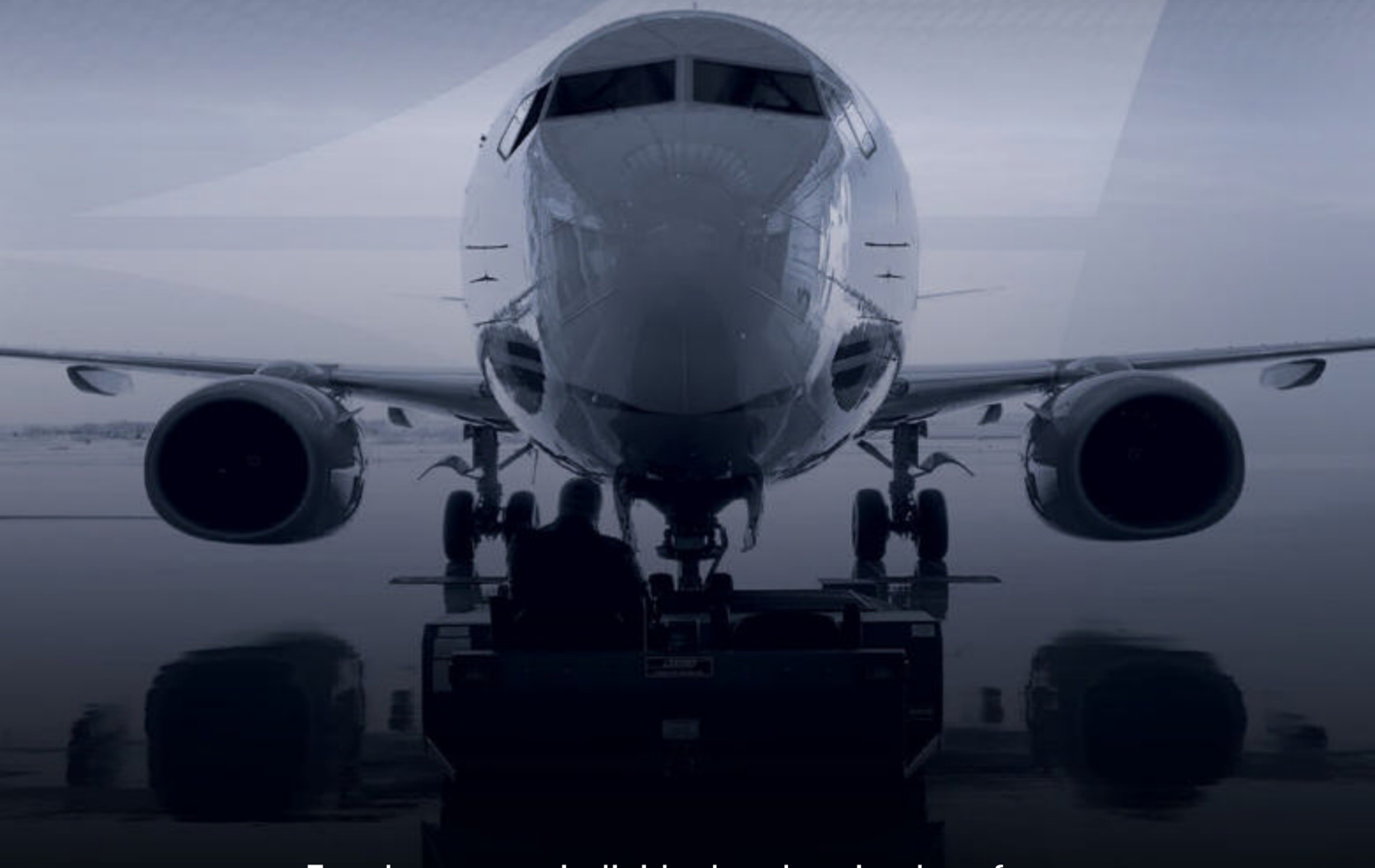
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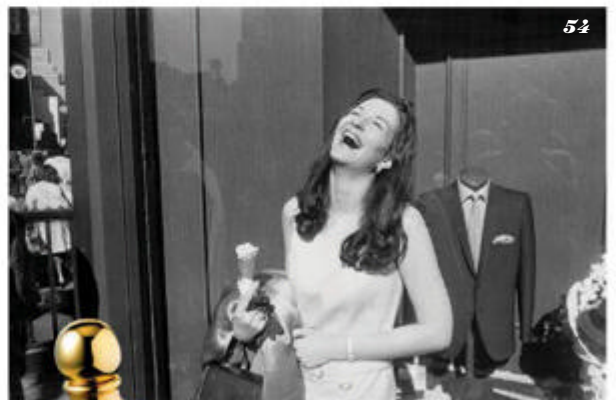
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Method of Magnus

THERE MAY BE no car collectors more fanatical than Porsche collectors. And together they form the world's largest auto-enthusiast group, the Porsche Club of America, a 115,000-members-strong organization largely devoted to factory-level perfection. "I'm not that guy," says Magnus Walker, a talented Porsche restorer and master of understatement. "I build cars to please myself."

Walker, a 47-year-old Brit who has lived in Los Angeles for the better part of three decades, starts with 911s from the late '60s and early '70s and creates ripping pieces of artwork that are part hot rod, part racecar, and part European classic. His signature touches include modish integrated rear turn lights, louvered engine covers, hole-punched chrome door handles, aggressively lowered bodies and wide wheels, and retro-inspired paint jobs. Walker builds 911s to drive—on track days, but particularly on the undulating canyon roads that surround Los Angeles. "I'm taking my favorite bits from these cars and adding soul, personality, patina," he says. "I build cars to be driven and to have fun with rather than to be rolled onto a golfing green to be judged by a group of people looking for imperfections."

And yet, Walker's outlaw tendencies are gaining favor among some of those Porsche purists. When *Road & Track* celebrated the 50th anniversary of the 911, it was Walker's 1972 911 STR II on the cover of the magazine, not a perfectly restored specimen or a Le Mans-winning piece of history. In the last couple of years, Walker (in his full dreadlocked, tattooed, rock-and-roll regalia) has been featured



"I build cars to be driven . . . rather than to be rolled onto a golfing green to be judged by a group of people looking for imperfections."

—MAGNUS WALKER

on *Fifth Gear* and *Jay Leno's Garage*. And one of his cars has indeed graced the golfing green at Pebble Beach.

That car—the '72 STR II cover car, the one he calls "my crowning glory, I guess"—was the first Magnus Walker Porsche sold at auction. It fetched \$302,500 in Gooding & Co.'s 2013 Pebble Beach sale, more than double its high estimate. And the buyer? None other than Bob Ingram, the renowned Porsche collector and the subject of this month's cover story ("Turbo Props," page 36). That muscular 911 is the only non-factory restoration in Ingram's classic collection, Walker proudly points out, "and the great thing is, the Ingrams drive them."

That's Walker behind the wheel of the STR II (shown), shortly before he sold it. In all, he has done full restorations or cosmetic makeovers on 40 911s, and he still has 20 of them in his downtown L.A. garage, including one from each year from 1964 to 1973. "They represent the glory years," he says. "Plus my tweaks."

Michalene Busico, Editor
mbusico@robbreport.com

CORRECTION An incorrect estimate appeared in our preview to the Guernsey's auction of Chet Atkins's Gretsch 6120 prototype in the February issue ("Opening Bids," page 22). The estimate by an outside expert should have been \$250,000.

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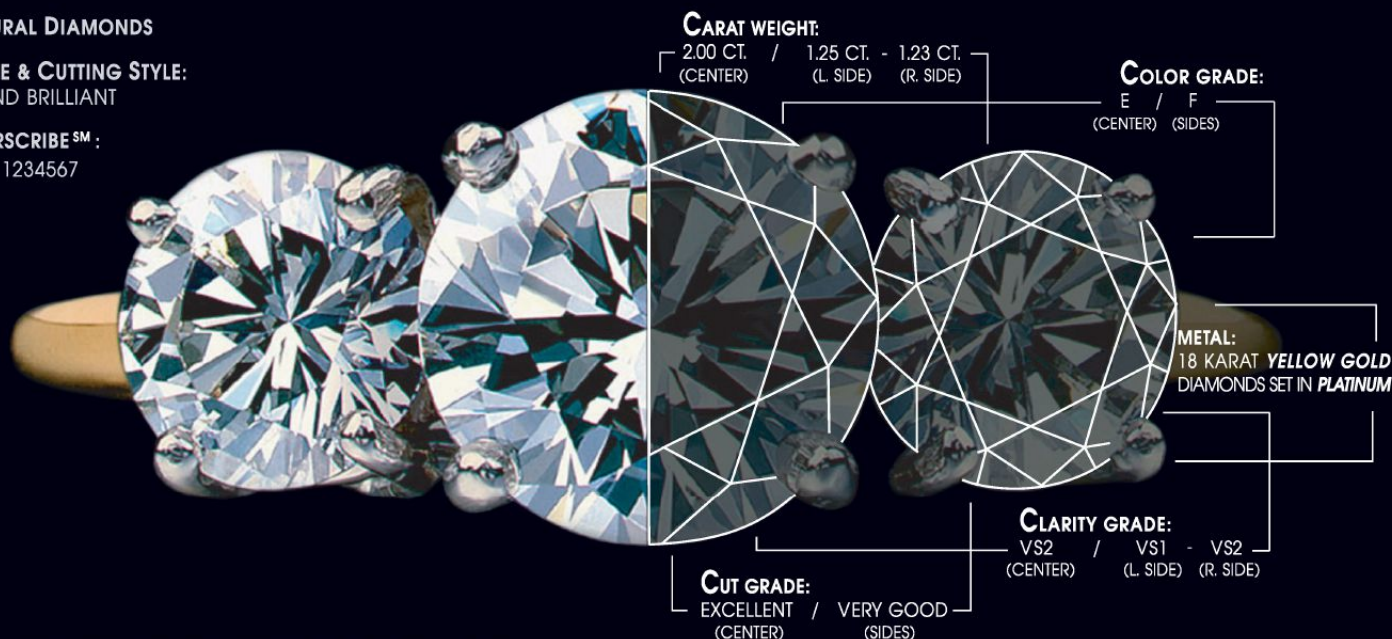
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China Syndrome

WHEN CHINA'S PERIOD of economic reform commenced in 1978, a new wave of experimental and avant-garde art began to tackle the big topics that emerged when communism and capitalism slammed together. Rebellion, consumerism, leisure: These were all new themes to explore, along with the age-old sentiments of angst and disenchantment. The "Cynical Realism" movement emerged in the early 1990s, after the crackdown on protesters in Tiananmen Square. One of the most well known and respected of these Cynical Realists is Fang Lijun, who lives and works in Beijing, and whose works often hint at the feelings of helplessness that accompanied China's rapid economic expansion and liberalization. In the West, Fang's breakthrough moment came in 1993, when his painting known as either *The Yawn* or *The Howl* was on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine*. Artnet included Fang in its list of 50 contemporary artists that performed surprisingly well at auction last year.

Sotheby's spring sales in Hong Kong will offer several significant Cynical Realism pieces, and one of the most important is Fang's *1996 No. 4* (shown above), an oil on canvas measuring about 6 feet high by 7.5 feet wide. The bald man is a recurring figure in Fang's work—sometimes appearing alone, sometimes in multiples crowding a frame—his focus ambiguous, even his expression often impossible to parse. Perhaps not coincidentally, he and the artist share the same haircut. —KAREN CAKEBREAD

Estimate: \$2.3 million to \$3.1 million (USD). **Sale:** Sotheby's Modern and Contemporary Asian Art evening sale, April 4, Hong Kong; sothebys.com

The Hollywood Enigma

CHALK IT UP to the wonders of Hollywood that a British mathematician who died 60 years ago is having a celebrity moment. The man, of course, is Alan Turing, whose life is the subject of the *The Imitation Game*, a film that received eight Oscar nominations and made



Turing and his code-breaking work during World War II part of 21st-century pop culture. In recent years, Turing items at auction have also been in the spotlight, particularly Enigma machines—the Nazi coding devices Turing toiled to defeat. “Around 2007, three-

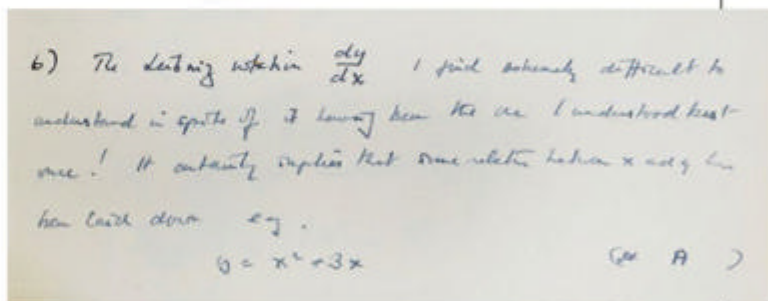
rotor Enigmas were going for £25,000 [about \$38,000] at auction,” says James Hyslop, the head of travel, science, and natural history at Christie’s. The house sold an Enigma for \$82,000 in September, after another Enigma went for \$107,000 in 2010.

Turing’s 56-page journal from those war years, a notebook that Bonhams will auction in April, is expected to reach seven figures. Following Turing’s suicide in 1954, the journal and other Turing possessions were bequeathed to his fellow mathematician Robin Gandy, who wrote a journal of his own in the blank pages of Turing’s notebook. But do not expect revelations, or even hints, about Enigma. “Knowing that the fate of countless lives depended upon his work, Turing took the greatest precautions to keep it confidential,” says Cassandra Hatton, a senior specialist at Bonhams. “This included not speaking or writing about it anywhere outside of authorized channels. What the manuscript shows us is that while he was enmeshed in doing lifesaving work during the day, in his free time he was still devoted to work in pure mathematics.” —K.C.

Estimate: More than \$1 million. **Sale:** Bonhams Fine Books & Manuscripts, New York, April 13; bonhams.com



Clockwise from far left: A young Alan Turing; a Nazi Enigma machine that sold at Christie’s last fall for \$82,000; Turing’s manuscript, which is expected to fetch at least \$1 million at a Bonhams auction April 13; Benedict Cumberbatch plays Turing in the 2014 film *The Imitation Game*



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Garage Sale

ONE OF THE FINEST car collections in the country is paring down: Paul Andrews and his son, Chris, of Fort Worth, Texas, will offer 75 swoon-worthy automobiles on May 2 through RM Auctions (rmauctions.com), a sale representing the bulk of their approximately 100 automotive treasures. When Paul started collecting and restoring cars in the late '80s, he sought models he admired as a boy, beginning with a 1958 Cadillac Seville. The collection today, while dazzling to behold, was assembled to be driven at rallies the family enters each year (they will continue to do so, with a more manageable stable of 15 or 20 rally cars). Each specimen in the sale is a premier representative of its type, be it a 1927 Ford "Voodoo Doll" or a 2008 Ferrari 599 GTB. Here are some highlights. —K.C.



▲ **1935 DUESENBERG MODEL SJ TOWN CAR**

The dramatic coachwork was designed by Duesenberg's design head, J. Herbert Newport, with the actress Mae West in mind, but the car was instead purchased by Ethel Mars of the candy-making family. It is "a hit at whatever show it goes to," Paul says. (\$3.4 million to \$4.5 million)



▲ **1963 SHELBY 289 COMPETITION COBRA**

The first Cobra racecar Carroll Shelby sold to the public, this model has never been restored and is thus completely authentic. It is also well used: "It's been my go-to car for several rallies now," says Chris. (\$2.2 million to \$2.6 million)



▲ **1962 FERRARI 400 SUPERAMERICA SWB CABRIOLET**

The star of 1962's Geneva and New York auto shows, this was the last of only seven specimens bodied by Pininfarina. That same year, its owner ran it in speed tests on the Bonneville Salt Flats and it was featured in the pages of *Road & Track*. (\$7 million to \$8.5 million)



▲ **1953 ASTON MARTIN DB2/4 DROPHEAD COUPE**

One of only two Astons of this design commissioned by Bertone's Stanley Harold "Wacky" Arnolt, and a three-time prizewinner at Pebble Beach, it is customized with fitted luggage and picnic ware, and a monogrammed horn button. (\$1.4 million to \$1.8 million)



▲ **1953 CUNNINGHAM C3 COUPE**

Essentially a Hemi-powered Ferrari, this is one of the Andrews family's favorite rally cars. This example is the prototype for Briggs Cunningham's Vignale-bodied C3, restored with a 1957 300C engine (the original engine is included). (\$900,000 to \$1.2 million)



▲ **1938 PACKARD EIGHT CABRIOLET**

Another Andrews favorite, "it looks like the Batmobile from a different era," Chris says. This one-off from the Swiss coachbuilder Hermann Graber was a 1938 Geneva show car and won its class at Pebble Beach in 2011 (restoration by Steve Babinsky). (\$1.4 million to \$1.8 million)



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Sweet Chariot

IN 1870, King John of Saxony was ready for a new set of wheels. He commissioned a young Dresden coachbuilder, Carl Heinrich Gläser, to create a sweet town coach, a 14-foot wooden conveyance in green and black, his house colors. It was in use until 1918, when the German monarchy was abolished and the coach was moved from the royal stables to the Dresden Transportation Museum. It was parked there until 1949, when the German Democratic Republic seized it for the state's collection. On April 30, the coach will likely come into private hands, when it is auctioned by Christie's South Kensington (christies.com) as part of the European Noble & Private Collections sale. It is expected to fetch \$30,800 to \$61,600, a rather modest sum for a royal ride. —ANUSH BENLIYAN



That '70s Style

Opulent interior appointments include two hand-tufted benches in peach silk brocade, facing one another. Royal coaches were built deliberately narrow to be more intimate, seating up to two passengers on each bench.

Custom Paint

The Royal House of Saxony's coat of arms, in solid bronze gilt, depicts a crown-like chaplet of herbs over the kingdom's striped shield. The insignia is also present in the upholstery trim and ribbon detailing.

German Engineering

Gläser became the royal coachbuilder for the House of Saxony, supplying 125 carriages and seven sleighs to the court until 1903. In the 20th century, the Heinrich Gläser company went on to build chassis for Maybach, Audi, and Mercedes-Benz.

First-Class Coach

While commoners crammed into stage-coaches seating eight or more inside and many more atop the roof, town coaches were luxury vehicles that aristocrats used for jaunts around town to attend the theater or visit other dignitaries.

Hand and Footmen

Led by two horses, the carriage was driven by a single coachman. One or two footmen rode standing on the coach's rumble, ready to smooth the way over ditches or puddles.



War and Pieces

The World War II bombing of Dresden in 1945 left the city in ruins, but the royal town coach survived with only minor damage. After the war, the windows were replaced and three exterior side panels were repainted black.



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2014 FERRARI 458 ITALIA SPIDER

Paddle-shifted, seven-speed 570hp mid-engined supercar with a retractable roof. The special order interior features black and red leather, Alcantara and carbon fiber surfaces as well as Sport forged wheels and Sport Suspension with a suspension lifter system for clearing steep driveways.

No Reserve



2004 ASTON MARTIN VANQUISH

This Series 1 Vanquish has a 5.9-liter engine with a paddle-shifted six-speed automated manual transmission. The published top speed for this car is 200 mph. Aston Martins are well known for their finely finished exceptional interiors using the best leather hides.

No Reserve



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Million-Dollar Slice



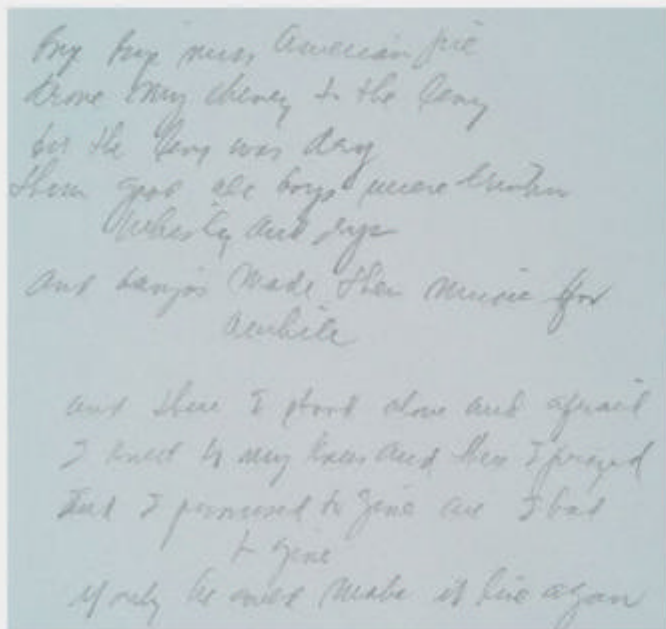
"American Pie" topped the Billboard charts shortly after its 1971 release and became an elegiac anthem for a generation, even if no one actually knew what Don McLean was singing about. Now McLean is selling the original manuscript and sparking hopes that some of the mysteries will be solved. The 16-page compilation of handwritten lyrics and typed drafts is filled

with McLean's cursive and three months of ideas and edits about the country's exasperated, contemplative state. "The Vietnam War was in high gear, and the government was the most hated entity," McLean remembers. "They were drafting people directly into the army and putting them on the front lines—if you were breathing, you were going. It was a very stressful time."

McLean worked on the song sporadically, often struck at random with phrases and melodies. "I felt like I had a radio in my head, and like a stenographer, I'd write it down or sing it into a tape recorder and wait for what was next." For more than four decades, McLean stored the lyrics in a banker's box in the attic of his New England home, until recently, at 69 years old, he decided to sell the manuscript: "It was instinct. It's time to lighten the load." Though many have analyzed the symbolism buried in the eight-and-a-half-minute track, McLean has a less deliberate perspective. "You'll see that stuff is crossed out and that I went in many different directions—but in no case was [the song] about 'This person is that and this person is this,'" he says. "There's no Rosetta Stone here. It all just has to do with this vision that I had. It's a dream. I wanted to capture a dream in a song. And I did."

—CAROLYN MEERS

Estimate: \$1 million to \$1.5 million. **Sale:** Christie's, April 7, New York City; christies.com



Athletics Feats

LONG BEFORE the *Moneyball* days, the Oakland Athletics enjoyed a dynastic run of success in the 1970s, winning three World Series in a row. Under its eccentric owner Charlie Finley, the team stood out not only for its imaginative wardrobe combinations in "kelly green, wedding-gown white, and Fort Knox gold," as Finley called the Athletics' colors, but also for its colorful cast of players like Catfish Hunter and Rolie Fingers. One of those players, Gene Tenace, is releasing two items for auction that stand as bookends to the Oakland Athletics' heyday from 1972 through 1974, when the team reigned supreme.

Tenace's 25-inch-tall World Series trophy is from 1972, the year in which he began the baseball season as a backup catcher and ended up as the World Series MVP. His 14-karat-gold championship ring is from 1974, when he played first base for the A's. The appropriately colored ring features Fort Knox gold and kelly green and sports a gold-edged shamrock with the "72/73/74" three-peat years and the winning equation, "S + S = S": Sweat plus Sacrifice equals Success. —K.C.

Estimate: \$25,000 for the trophy, \$40,000 for the ring; each includes a letter of authenticity from Gene Tenace. **Sale:** SCP Auctions Spring Premier, April 8 through 25; sepauctions.com



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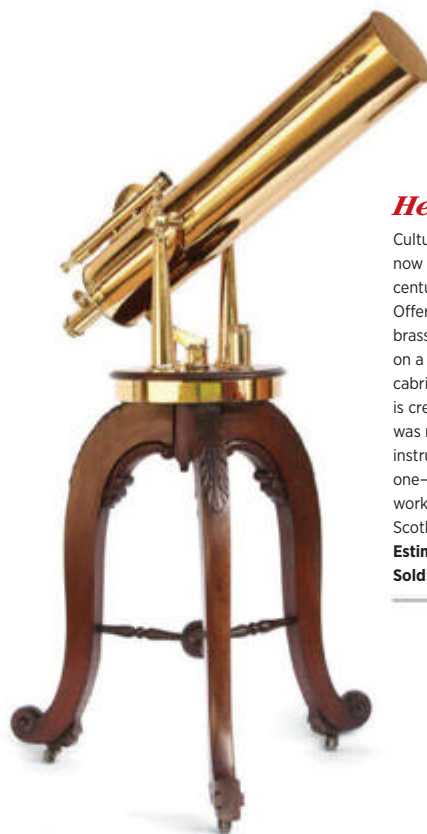
HAMMERED

This Old Chap

IN 2006, Bonhams London introduced an annual auction as curious as the objects it proffered. Called Gentleman's Library, the sale was packed with items one might find in a cultured Victorian's retreat, and it was an instant hit. This January's edition marked its 10th anniversary and the typically quirky inventory included antler-handled cutlery, a dinosaur bone cigar box, a surprisingly attractive chunk of tree fungus, a rare Kerala canoe, Egyptian bronzes and Roman marble statuary, an agate snuff bottle, and other fascinating specimens. The sale tallied a grand total of about \$1.7 million against an estimate of about \$2.2 million to \$3.1 million, with top lot honors going to an early Victorian parquet table, which fetched \$38,300. Curious treasures can make for curious performances, as the results show: The 2015 sale was almost 58 percent sold by lot and 62 percent sold by value.

For years, Bonhams had left field all to itself, but no more. Christie's London debuted its Out of the Ordinary auction in 2013 and it quickly earned a spot on the auction house's calendar (the next one is scheduled for September 10). Last year, Skinner, located in Boston, held its inaugural Gentleman's Auction, an online event that ran from November 20 through December 1. The second will likely happen in June, around Father's Day.

Though they take slightly different approaches, the three sales all draw upon virtually every department in the auction house. "Out of the Ordinary has now given us a place for the quirky, unusual pieces," says Anna Evans, director and head of European decorative arts at Christie's. "It's been incredibly successful. People really respond to it." Presumably, just like the Victorians responded to these intriguing objects for their personal domains. —SHEILA GIBSON STOODLEY



Heavenly Gaze

Cultured gentlemen then and now gazed upon the heavens, and centuries ago, they did it in style. Offered by Bonhams, this exquisite brass 7-inch reflecting telescope on a mahogany tripod base with cabriole legs, dating to 1850 or so, is credited to Thomas Morton. He was not a prolific maker of scientific instruments, but he was a good one—the only other example of his work is in the National Museum of Scotland.

Estimate: \$18,000 to \$27,500
Sold: \$26,000



Master of the Universe

Before Google Maps, the cultured elites relied on paper maps and globes for realistic geographic models. This 15½-inch set of tabletop spheres made in France in 1834, is exceptionally rare: Instead of the typical pairing of terrestrial and celestial globes, depicting the Earth and the constellations, this set features a terrestrial globe and an armillary sphere, which models objects in the sky. Michael Moorcroft, of Bonhams, says this might be the first such set ever offered at the house.

Estimate: \$6,000 to \$9,000, **Sold:** \$10,500



The Nuts

One of the oddly charming crazes of the Victorian era was taxidermied animals posed in whimsical ways, such as these red squirrels playing cards. Evans, of Christie's, was "not hugely surprised" by the strong performance of the lot: Taxidermy scenes such as these, still in good condition, are quite rare. And taxidermy itself is having a moment in contemporary art and decor.

Estimate: \$2,700 to \$3,800, **Sold:** \$9,200



Rare Specimen

Fossils, meteorites, and minerals were must-haves for the *kunstkammer*, a cabinet of curiosities kept by European royals and nobles. This 65-million-year-old opalized ammonite from South Dakota is actually a replica of a fossil; the precious mineral filled the space where the shell once was in the same way that Jell-O fills a mold. "The photo *does* do justice to it," says Michael Moorcroft, who is head of Bonhams' silver department and is involved with the Gentleman's Library auction. "It just glows."

Estimate: \$18,000 to \$24,500, **Sold:** Unsold



Roaring Finish

Though it underperformed its estimate, Stanley Wanlass's limited-edition bronze *Free Wheelin* did reasonably well. Jane Prentiss, Skinner's director of 20th-century design and also antique motor vehicles, cites past auction results for the bronze that show an artist's copy selling for \$12,650 in 2006 and a foundry copy garnering \$7,000 in 2014. The Wanlass, No. 7 in an edition of 30 cast between 1984 and 1987, drew presale attention for placing its glamorous female driver and her dog in a 1937 Alfa Romeo 2.9. "I had one man come in who kept staring at it," says Prentiss, who says he explained, "I used to have that car. I love that car." Mounted on a rotating walnut base, the 39½-inch-long sculpture coasted to top lot honors at the Massachusetts auction house's inaugural online Gentleman's Auction.

Estimate: \$12,000 to \$18,000, **Sold:** \$9,840

Jacket Required

The rich, buttoned-leather upholstery of these walnut library bergères conjures visions of a gent in a velvet smoking jacket sipping port. "They're typical of what people go for," Moorcroft says of the large, early Victorian rococo-revival pieces. "They don't need any work done to them. They can go in your dressing room tomorrow." The pair earned fourth place on the list of the 10 lots that earned the highest bids at Bonhams' Gentleman's Library sale.

Estimate: \$10,700 to \$15,000

Sold: \$24,900



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ON THE ROAD

Circuit Breaker

AT FIRST GLANCE, it is tempting to dismiss the Renovo Coupe as another boutique kit car dressed in Shelby Daytona sheet metal. What lies underneath, however, is not a growling big-block V-8, but rather one of the most technologically



advanced electric power trains to make its way onto a production sports car.

Envisioned by a team of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, the \$529,000 Renovo Coupe is fitted with twin mid-mounted, sequential axial-flux electric motors and a proprietary 740-volt lithium-ion battery pack that churns out more than 500 hp and an impressive 1,000 ft lbs of torque. It dashes from zero to 60 mph in a mere 3.4 seconds, with a top speed of over 120 mph. Fewer than 100 examples will be produced, with deliveries slated to begin by the end of the year.

Though it might seem sacrilegious to drop a pair of electric motors into the body of a car whose very sight evokes

the smell of petrol, the Renovo Coupe has real street cred, developed in collaboration with Shelby American and built using a genuine Shelby Daytona Coupe CSX9000 chassis from DenBeste Motorsports. Essentially a modern incarnation of the vaunted Shelby Daytona racecars of the 1960s designed by Peter Brock and Bob Negstad, the CSX9000's body and certain structural components were slightly modified—with input from Brock himself—to better accommodate Renovo's electric power train and three battery packs. The Coupe can fully charge in about 30 minutes using a DC fast charger or about five hours with a Level 2 charger, with a total range of about 100 miles. —LAURA BURSTEIN

Q & A

The Artful Detective

Last October, Detective Don Hrycyk solved one of the biggest cases of art theft in Los Angeles history, recovering more than \$13 million in works by artists such as Marc Chagall and Hans Hofmann (below) that had been stolen from a home in Encino. For Hrycyk, it was all part of the job: For 21 years, he has led the Los Angeles Police Department's Art Theft Detail, the only unit in the country devoted solely to art crime, and has returned an estimated \$121 million in stolen works to their rightful collectors. —MICHAEL KRIKORIAN



How busy are you?

We are usually working on 10 to 15 cases at a time. But they can take years to complete—the Encino case took six years.

Tell us about them.

We try to provide a service to anybody—collectors and artists—who gets works stolen or is swindled. The vast majority of stolen art is through run-of-the-mill burglaries. The thief will take cash, jewelry, a camera, and then they might see an Erté bronze or a painting in a fancy frame, so they take that, too.

When we started, art theft was defined only as stolen paintings, sculptures, and limited-edition prints. But now, we are all over the map—collectibles, animation art, rare books. We also handle some insurance fraud cases: Someone might report their Matisse missing, but it's a fake. And fraudulent art is a big part of our caseload, like the people selling a fake Monet, Renoir, or Picasso drawing for \$1,000 online. A lot of these people are just ignorant; they don't know it's fraudulent. We're looking for someone who has larceny in their heart.

Anyone stand out?

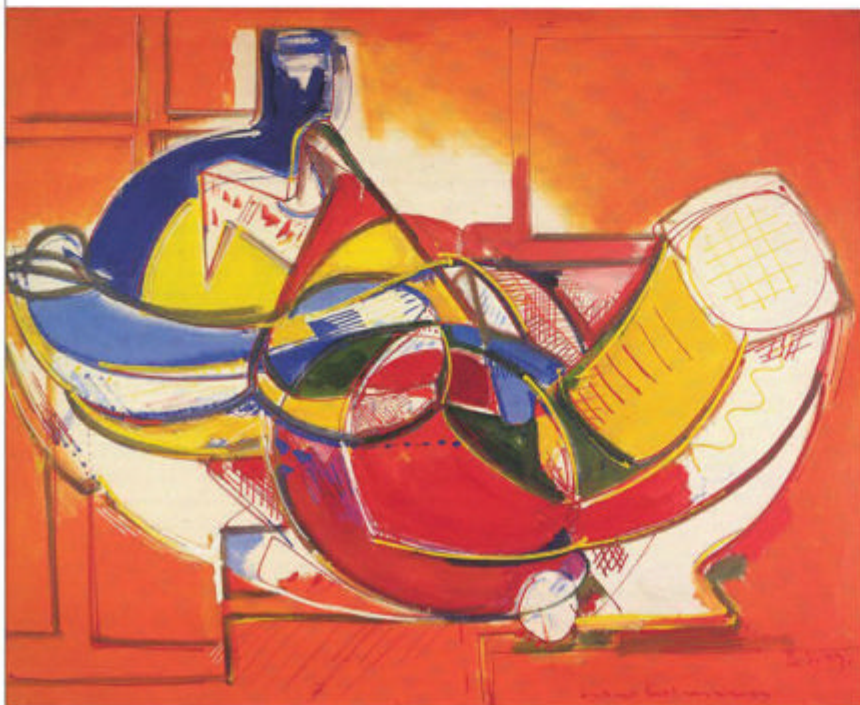
A lot of these thefts are huge betrayals. There was this guy—Matthew Taylor—a very slick con man who sold over 100 [fake or stolen] paintings to one person here in town. From this one rich guy alone, he made several million dollars. The victim was not an art person, but he was so proud of his collection that he would have charity groups come to his house and either he or Matthew Taylor would take the group on a tour of the artwork. He invited curators from the L.A. County Museum of Art, from the Getty Museum, people who are subject-matter experts. You know how many of these people told him that he had fake art?

None?

None. And they knew it. I asked them why and it had to do with strategy: It was a social visit. They didn't want to let the wind out of the sails. They were looking at him as a prospective donor to their museums and didn't want to insult his judgment. And they worried about liability—they didn't want to become the instigator of a lawsuit. [In July 2013, Taylor was convicted of selling stolen art and tax evasion and sentenced to 7½ years in federal prison.]

What would you tell collectors?

Don't buy on impulse. Become an informed purchaser and take the time to do research. And always get a second opinion on the authenticity and value of the art.





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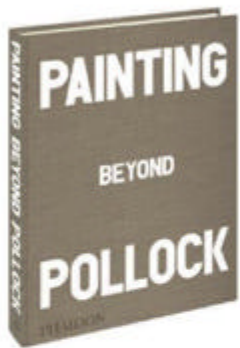
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Charles Lapicque's *Joan of Arc Crossing the Loire* is one of more than 250 pieces of postwar art that historian Morgan Falconer explores in his new book.



OFF THE SHELF

Brush Off

IN THE 1950s AND '60s, art observers fretted that Jackson Pollock had “destroyed painting”—a juncture that the British art historian, critic, and journalist Morgan Falconer dives into with his new book, *Painting Beyond Pollock* (Phaidon, \$80). In 10 scholarly chapters on Western art, illustrated with more than 250 works, the book examines 175 artists from Francis Bacon, one of the earliest emblems of the postwar period, to contemporary

luminaries such as Ed Ruscha, Elizabeth Peyton, and Mark Bradford. “It really was a gap in art history,” Falconer says. “Painting became very unfashionable. There was not much enthusiasm amongst academics to write a serious history.”

In particular, Falconer hopes the 384-page tome will shed light on artists who defy the standard postwar categories, such as Blinky Palermo, Peter Doig, and Jean Fautrier. “I think there is enormous

unfounded enthusiasm for painters like Jean-Michel Basquiat and Lucian Freud,” Falconer says. “Their contributions do not stack up with what their works fetch at auction. It would be great if this book leads to more questioning.”

Enthusiasts can also hear Falconer in a May 17 lecture at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Ark., about painting in an increasingly digital world. —AMANDA MILLIN



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RM AUCTIONS

ON THE BLOCK

A Place In the Sun

DOYLE NEW YORK (doylenewyork.com), an auction house best known for handling Hollywood estates and spectacular jewelry, has expanded into familiar territory. In November it opened a new office in Beverly Hills near Rodeo Drive, and in January it ushered in Oscar season with a lively party for 300 collectors.

In its 53 years, Doyle has auctioned the estates of Gloria Swanson, Bette Davis, James Cagney, Rock Hudson, and other film legends. Among its many notable jewelry lots was a pair of natural pearls set in a pendant that fetched \$3.3 million last April—a world record for a pair of pearls at auction that crushed the previous record by almost \$900,000.

The Los Angeles outpost, which will also handle fine art and numerous other categories, will initially focus on jewelry. Its first sale, taking place May 21 at L'Ermitage Hotel, will feature roughly 400 pieces of jewelry, including 18-karat gold Cartier panther ear clips with emerald eyes (\$1,500 to \$2,000), a ruby, emerald, and diamond flamingo brooch (\$3,000 to \$5,000) modeled after one owned by the Duchess of Windsor, and an unheated 3.75-carat ruby from Burma (\$10,000 to \$15,000) in its most sought-after shade, pigeon blood. “Typically Burmese rubies will have more of a raspberry pink color,” explains Nan Summerfield, Doyle’s director of California operations and a GIA graduate gemologist. “To get an unheated ruby from Burma in that beautiful red color is very hard to find.” But the star lot is a 1920s Janesich pendant watch. Expected to surpass its \$30,000 estimate, the unique timepiece has never been offered at auction, and it features enamel, arabesque details, an emerald, a natural pearl, and a rondelle diamond of at least 2.5 carats. —AMANDA MILLIN



Doyle's first Los Angeles auction will feature about 400 pieces of jewelry, including a rare Janesich pendant watch that has been with the original owners since it was crafted in the 1920s and a pair of Cartier panther ear clips from the 1980s with piercing emerald eyes.





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“Don’t chase the most popular wines of the moment. Try to understand those wines people do not collect.” —SCOTT TORRENCE, CHRISTIE’S WINE SPECIALIST

IN THE CELLAR

The Inside Man

AS A CHRISTIE’S vice president and senior wine specialist, Scott Torrence evaluates, assesses, and drinks some of the greatest vintages in the world. But when *Robb Report Collection* asked him to name his top five investment wines, Torrence did not choose the Grand Cru Burgundies or first-growth Bordeaux that break records at auction. Instead, Torrence—who maintains a disciplined personal cellar of just 20 cases—selected wines that meet his personal investment criteria. “This is what I buy for my own cellar: wines that offer extreme value relative to their aging potential,” he says, “wines that are modestly priced and age better than some very expensive wines that are well known.”

These are insider wines—the under-the-radar bottles favored by sommeliers and wine geeks, often from the second tier of revered regions or the choicest corner of a storied vineyard. Torrence’s preferences are French and Italian, from producers that employ traditional wine-making techniques, and they evolve slowly over decades rather than years. They are all made in small quantities, hence their dollar-investment potential. But more significant for Torrence, they are also wise investments for the thirsty collector. “My pursuit is understanding the moment of ultimate drinkability,” Torrence says. “And that means you’ve got to pull corks.” —MICHAELNE BUSICO



1/ San Fabiano Calcinaia Chianti Gran Selezione Cellole (2010, \$41)

Gran Selezione is a new category at the top of Italy’s Chianti Classico hierarchy. Intended to be the region’s answer to Brunello di Montalcino, the Sangiovese-based Gran Selezione wines are made from top estate-grown fruit and aged at least 30 months in oak and bottle, making 2010 the first release. “They have to introduce the category so prices are very accessible,” Torrence says. “It’s the new thing on my radar and this one is the first to hit the shores here in America.”



2/ Rayas Château de Fonsalette Côtes du Rhône Cuvée Syrah Reserve (current 2008 release, \$137)

Part of the Château Rayas family of wines, but unlike the others, its vines are just outside the Châteauneuf-du-Pape region. Made from 100 percent Syrah grown in the southern Rhône, it is both unusually intense and intensely pursued by collectors. “If you can find bottles, they will reward you with years of aging, and also a fair rate of return because there is so little of it in the secondary market. The people who buy it rarely sell it.”



Sweet Dividends

Vintage ports have proven to be historically good investments, especially those from major labels such as Taylor Fladgate and Dow's. But recently, tawny ports have been attracting more attention among collectors, as a few port suppliers have started releasing some older, extremely limited wines.

While vintage ports represent a single harvest, tawny ports are blended from various years. But occasionally an older tawny will be so extraordinary it will be bottled without blending, as a single-harvest tawny, or *colheita*. Such was the case with Graham's 1969 Single Harvest Tawny Port (\$350, grahams-port.com), which was so superb that after tasting 21 casks, winemaker Charles Symington selected six of the best for this limited release. It pours with an amber-rust hue and releases a heady bouquet of toasted cinnamon, intermingled with flavors of honeyed walnuts, burnt caramel, and stewed fruit. Each barrel yielded 712 numbered bottles. —RICHARD CARLETON HACKER



3 / *Domaine Tempier Bandol Cabassaou* (current 2012 release, \$98)

"I'm a big collector of Tempier—they just blow your mind in terms of what they become with 25, 30 years of cellaring," he says. Among Tempier's collectible single-vineyard bottlings, Torrence singles out Cabassaou, a wine made from grapes grown in a warmer section of Tempier's cool, La Tourtine vineyard. The result is a richer, meatier, "magnificent" Mourvèdre. Another "passion purchase" that rarely makes it to auction.



4 / *Château d'Epiré Cuvée Spéciale Savennières* (2012, \$30)

A defining element of importer Kermit Lynch's portfolio, the Cuvée Spéciale is Lynch's exclusive bottling of Loire Valley Chenin Blanc, made from a prized parcel of old vines and aged in old chestnut casks. "It's also unfiltered, so it's a little cloudy but the flavor and perfume is unmatched," Torrence says. "I have tasted back until the '70s and it is amazing how it gracefully ages. Very few white Burgundies, Premier Cru or Grand Cru, will go even 20 years."



5 / *Produttori del Barbaresco Riserva Ovello* (2009, \$63)

At a third of the price of a top Barolo, this 100 percent Nebbiolo "is a little secret you don't fully understand until you've been drinking Barbaresco and Barolo for a while." The ultratraditional production expresses the essence of the Ovello vineyard and the earthy style of the Piedmont region. Today wines from the 1970s and '80s are "really tradeable," Torrence says. "It's a big wine that will dispose of the broad-brush idea that Barbarescos are more delicate than Barolo." 🍷

TURBO PROPS

VINTAGE PORSCHEs ARE ASCENDING TO NEW
HEIGHTS AMONG COLLECTORS. BY MATT CROSSMAN





Classic 911s are leading Porsche's surge at auction. This 1968 911 L, a rare 210 hp 5-speed, fetched \$583,000 at Pebble Beach in 2013, almost \$200,000 over its high estimate. It is now owned by Bob Ingram and his family, who have assembled one of the most admired Porsche collections in the United States.



IT IS CALLED THE GIANT KILLER. The Porsche 550 Spyder sits near the back of the Ingram family's storied collection of Porsches in a beautiful old Studebaker warehouse in Durham, N.C. It lies in wait, ready to attack, like it did when it raced on circuits across the United States in the mid-1950s, slaying foes alleged to be much more formidable. Cam Ingram circles around the Spyder, taking in from every angle the unadorned beauty of the first production racecar Porsche ever made.

Porsches endure, in part, because they are arrestingly simple, even inevitable—and this car is a perfect example. It is silver and low slung, without an extraneous curve or superfluous rivet on its sleek aluminum body, penned by Porsche designer Erwin Komenda. The longer you stare at it, the more overwhelming the desire to climb in and take off.

Lately, Porsche fans have been putting up big dollars to indulge that need for speed. In the last four years, Porsche 550s have quadrupled in value, and 993s, the 911s of 1993 to 1999, have tripled in just the last 18 months, says Richard Sloan, who sells Porsches through Sloan Cars in New Haven, Conn. The surge of the 993 partly reflects collectors' interest in air-cooled engines, as it was the last Porsche

to have that type. "It's just absolutely bedlam," Sloan says of the market. The results at the January Scottsdale auctions prove his point: The average selling price for a Porsche was \$336,200—more than triple what it was four years earlier, with prices buoyed by a 1966 906 Carrera 6 that fetched \$1.98 million and a 1988 959 Sport that drew \$1.7 million, both at Gooding & Co.

The spiraling value of Porsches coincides with an upsurge across the collectible car market, which started roughly four years ago and continues to accelerate, depending on the model. No surprise, classic 911s made from 1964 to 1999 are leading the pack. In January, Russo and Steele sold a 1974 911 2.7 RS for \$302,500—the highest price for a 911 in Scottsdale this year. In Scottsdale overall, 23 classic 911s sold for an average of \$166,698. No doubt, Porsche mania is alive and well.

Which leads us back to the Ingrams' Spyder. The car was a technological marvel when it was introduced in 1953, with a design lifted from German airplane technology. Put wings on this bad boy and it would fly: The 1,498 cc Fuhrmann-type 547 mid-mounted engine launches the Spyder to a top speed of



Meet the Giant Killer (near right and inset), the Ingram family's prize 1955 Porsche 550 Spyder. One of the most notable sales at the January Scottsdale auctions was a 1966 Porsche 906 Carrera 6 (top) that went for \$1.98 million at Gooding & Co.





PREVIOUS SPREAD AND BOTTOM: MICHAEL FURMAN; TOP: MATHEU HEURTALUT

135 mph. “You’re talking about a 1,200-pound car that has 150 horsepower,” says Cam Ingram. “It’s like a go-kart on steroids.”

The Ingrams behind the collection—Cam, his father Bob, mother Jeanie, and brother Rory—will not say exactly how many Porsches they own, but their collection is among the deepest in the country. The Spyder—sometimes called the James Dean car because the actor was driving one in his fatal crash—ranks among its jewels. So do the 1949 356/2 Gmünd coupe, a rare Austria-made Porsche; the 1988 959 Supercar; and the aluminum-bodied 1967 911 R. Bob Ingram, the former CEO of GlaxoSmithKline, started it all in 1991, when he bought his first Porsche, a 911 C4 Cabriolet. But things got serious in 1998 after spying a 356

on a family trip to the Monterey Historic Automobile Races. Cam Ingram, too, was so awed by the 356’s simple beauty that he devoured every word he could about Porsches and started Road Scholars, a Porsche renovation company with shops in Durham and on San Juan Island, Wash. His restoration of a Gmünd owned by Hans Peter Porsche won first place in its class at Pebble Beach in 2011.

Now the Ingrams divide their cars into four separate collections: early Porsches,





first production racecars, Turbos (they have one of every Turbo ever made from 1975 until production stopped in 1997), and Rennsports (commonly known as RS, these were produced so that competition cars could be called production-based racecars). Jeanie Ingram sums things up for all of them when she extols the pleasure of barreling down I-95 in her 1955 Speedster, a cream 356 that stands just

4 feet tall, houses a 4-cylinder rear-mounted air-cooled engine, and hits a top speed of 109 mph.

“Well,” she says, “I like to drive fast.”

THE PORSCHE FAMILY has been helping drivers do that since Ferdinand Porsche fabricated an electric vehicle before the turn of the last century. The Porsche name is behind two of the most iconic cars ever built—the 911, of course, and the Volkswagen Beetle, designed by Ferdinand Porsche long before he and his son, Ferdinand “Ferry” Porsche, opened their

SECOND LOOKS

AS THE MOST PRIZED VINTAGE PORSCHEs skyrocket in value, some of the marque’s lesser models are becoming investment material. Among those getting a second look:

▼ **The 914.** A skinny cousin to the buff 911, this Volkswagen-Porsche collaboration made from 1969 to 1976 is getting much-needed love. In March, it was a featured car at the Amelia Island Concours d’Elegance. “These are not your average everyday 914s,” says Mark Becker, vice chairman of the concours (indeed, one had been converted into a pickup truck). According to Hagerty Insurance, a 1970–72 model of the 914 6 sold for an average of \$24,133 in 2010 and \$44,000 this year, an increase of 82 percent.



▼ **The 930.** This model, also known as the 911 Turbo, was produced from 1975 through 1989 with an air-cooled flat-six engine that cranked out 256 hp. Drew Alcazar, co-owner and CEO of Russo and Steele, says Porsche 930s fall into the “smart buy” category and “are certainly worth a look for investors looking for strong long-term prospects.” The 1986–89 models showed particular strength, Hagerty found, with a 104 percent increase in the last five years.



own shop in Gmünd, Austria, in 1948 with 200 employees.

Their first sports car was the 356, which debuted that same year. Its rear-mounted engine produced just 40 hp. But it was comfortable, reliable, and handled well—all traits that have characterized Porsches since then. The 911 followed in 1964 and remains among the most recognizable cars in the world. Throughout its history the company also has been devoted to racing, with an estimated 24,000 wins in races worldwide. There may be no group of car collectors more passionate: The Porsche Club of America boasts 115,000 members, which makes it the largest car club for a single marque in the world—with new converts daily. Last year in the United States, Porsche had its two best single-month sales totals ever. The Macan, a midsize SUV, has a six-month waiting list. The 918 Spyder is *Robb Report's* 2015 Car of the Year.

Porsche passion starts with a simple premise: Driving is fun. Driving fast is more fun. Driving fast with a visceral connection between you and the pavement is the most fun. And that is where Porsches really shine. Porsche denizens scoff at such modern conveniences as power steering and power brakes. They want to drive their cars, not just ride along as modern technology does all the work. Another key factor in Porsche's enduring appeal is its consistency, both in performance and appearance, throughout the company's history and up and down its product line. Walking through the Ingrams' collection is like walking through a family reunion, with the 1949 Gmünd the grandfather of the tribe.

The Gmünd, highlighted in a book cowritten by Cam Ingram called *Porsche Unexpected: Discoveries in Collecting*, is the

family's most historically significant car. Designed by Komenda, it has one of the last surviving hand-pounded aluminum bodies. It was built by hand in the company's shop in Gmünd, before the company moved and eventually settled in Stuttgart, Germany. The Ingrams' Gmünd is chassis no. 17, one of the oldest remaining models. In the Ingrams' warehouse, it is surrounded by its myriad descendants, and the family resemblance is uncanny.

"If you look at the Gmünd, and you go to the latest 911, you can see the shape has not dramatically changed," Bob Ingram says. "The basic shape is still the same. I don't know that there are many brands of any kind of product that over 60 years you can say that about."

Wherever a Porsche falls on the family tree, it gets driven. A lot. "They are a supercar that you can drive every day," says Vu Nguyen, the executive director of Porsche Club of America. "No matter if it's a '70s Porsche, an '80s Porsche, a '90s or today's Porsche, you can wake up, drive to work, you can go to the grocery store, come home, go to dinner on Friday night, pack it up, take it to the track, pound

The Ingrams' collection includes a 1949 Porsche 356/2 Gmünd coupe (left). The Austria-made coupe was Porsche's first sports car, and its DNA is still carried throughout the family line.

▼ **The 912.** The 912 sat in the 911's shadow for years. In production from 1965 to 1969, it had two fewer cylinders so it lacked the same power and was significantly cheaper. Owners were not hard-core Porsche enthusiasts and were more likely to update the cars, which is anathema among purists. But the 912 has enjoyed a bit of a comeback lately, caught up in the rising tide of the 911 and 356. A 912 sold at Gooding & Co. in January for \$82,500—an unthinkable price just a few years ago.



▼ **The RS America.** When the RS America, a limited edition of the 911 Carrera, was introduced in 1993 it was heralded, as many Porsches are, as a racecar built for the street. Enthusiasts loved its minimalist, frills-free design. And today, with renewed interest in that pared-down style, collectors are taking another look at this model. Hagerty's research shows the RS America has nearly tripled in value over the last five years, from \$32,100 to \$93,400. —M.C.



on it all weekend at the track, then take it home, rinse it off, and repeat on Monday morning.”

“Way different than Ferrari,” says Ranson Webster, the founder and managing member of an investment group in Reno, Nev. His collection of 50-plus Porsches stands with the Ingrams’ as among the best in the United States. Webster focuses on vintage racecars and limited-production models—with a particular focus on four-cam engine cars, an assemblage believed to be the most extensive outside of Stuttgart. He also owns a large parts inventory and an extensive array of Porsche model cars, posters, and brochures in every language for every model through 1987. About 95 percent of Webster’s cars qualify as

concours level. He drives them anyway.

“It’s a shame to have a wonderful collector Porsche racecar and let it sit on a pedestal and stand back and polish it,” says Webster, who bought his first Porsche, a turbo Carrera, in 1979. He became a serious collector around 1998, after he sold Computing Resources Inc., a payroll services company he founded. “It just seems to me that cars are made to drive. They weren’t made to look at.”

ALAS, there are exceptions even for Webster, including his 1962 804 Formula 1 car, the only Porsche to ever win an F1 race, which puts it at the top of all Porsches in terms of provenance.

Sitting behind the cockpit is a 1,494 cc engine. It is air cooled, horizontally opposed, and generates 180 hp at 9,200 rpm. But the car weighs just 996.5 pounds and has no roll cage. If the Ingrams’ 550 Spyder is a go-kart on steroids, the 804 is a jet fighter on Red Bull. “A death trap,” Webster calls it. As much as

OPPOSITE TOP: DARIN SCHABEL/AM AUCTIONS

“THEY ARE A SUPERCAR THAT YOU CAN DRIVE EVERY DAY.”

—VU NGUYEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PORSCHE CLUB OF AMERICA





he likes to feel the road beneath him, the possibility of that happening *too* literally is too great.

But the 804 is the exception. If a car can be driven, Webster drives it. His 935 K3 racecar is so notoriously difficult to drive that he was told not to bother trying. The three-liter engine generates massive horsepower relative to the racecar's weight, which means the back end shimmies like a sundress every time it takes a turn.

But that did not sound *difficult* to Webster. It sounded *fun*. Plus, the 935 is an important car in Porsche's racing history. It is essentially a 911 transformed into a racecar, with a flat nose and a wing on the spoiler. It dominated Group 5 for years and won at Sebring, Daytona, and Nürburgring.

Webster committed himself to learning how to get his pink-and-white 935 K3 to go where he wanted it to go, when he wanted it to go there. Which is not as easy as it sounds.

"You really drive that car with the throttle more than with the wheel, understanding that when you go around corners you're slipping at all times," he says. "It's kind of a brute, you know?"

But oh, what a bodacious, breathtaking brute. 🐾

In May, a 2008 Porsche Cayman S racecar (top) will be offered in the Andrews collection sale by RM Auctions; it is expected to fetch \$75,000 to \$100,000. Ranson Webster's 1976 Porsche 935 K3 (bottom) is a variation on the 935 produced by the professional drivers (and brothers) Erwin and Manfred Kremer.



GADGETS, GEAR, AND GIFTS

DISCERNMENT IS THE pinnacle of collecting, the culmination of knowing all of the appealing options and recognizing which is the best of the best. Whatever attracts one's eye, be it a finely rendered objet d'art or an exquisitely balanced chef's knife, it should engage the mind and the senses, and make the task at hand a pleasure.

The following pages offer a selection of accessories, electronics, sporting gear, and other accoutrements for living well that do exactly that. Over the years, we have come to believe that beauty is inherent in great design, and so even the most utilitarian items will make life not only easier but also more satisfying.

In the end, it does not matter whether the purchase is for yourself or for someone else: Each is a kind of gift, a reward for knowing the difference.

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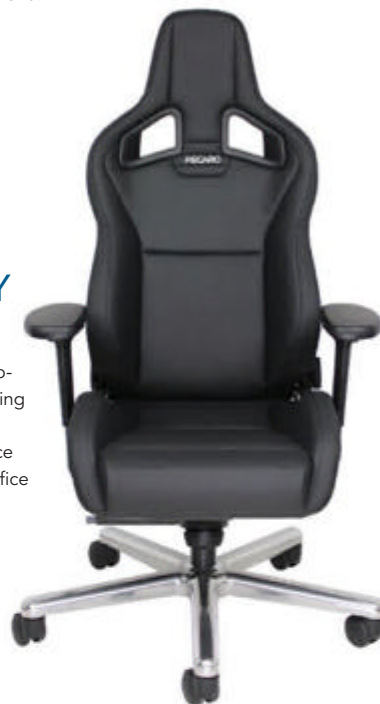
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A Forest of Imagination

Pure instinct led Fleur Bresler to create one of the country's foremost collections of wood art.

BY BARBARA KING



FLEUR BRESLER MAKES no bones about it: Col-

lecting is her addiction, and at 88, she still loves the high. Every time she finds an art piece that calls to her—and there are plenty that do—she feels an immediate rush. “My heart flutters and I know I’ve got to have whatever that object is. If I don’t, I’m never going to forget it and I’m never going to forgive myself. It will absolutely haunt me. I still remember a quilt that got away decades ago. I can probably draw a picture of the darn thing.”

She is, by her own admission, a collecting “clutterer,” even if her alleged clutter is of a highly selective nature and displayed with a curator’s eye. Her Rockville, Md., apartment is filled to overflowing with some 1,500 works of art, ranging from tiny silver teapots to a towering fiber sculpture. But her predominant focus for the last 30

Among the contemporary wood artworks Fleur Bresler donated to the Smithsonian Institution’s Renwick Gallery are *Hana Valley, First View* (center) by Derek A. Bencomo, a milo wood piece that captures the crashing waves and jagged cliffs of Maui, and *Suspended Ring Vase* (left), a spalted sugar-maple burl work by Michelle Holzapfel.



years has been turned and carved wood—a collection of 950 objects that she has been amassing ever since she stumbled across a groundbreaking exhibition at the Renwick Gallery, the crafts and decorative arts branch of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

On a spring afternoon in 1986, she was strolling along Pennsylvania Avenue when she got caught in a thunderstorm. By hap-



Clockwise from top left: Ron Fleming's *Red Fern* (1995), a box-elder carving inspired by his wife's garden; Fleur Bresler's gallery-like living room, with a Nick Cave Soundsuit sculpture in the far corner; Bresler at home; *The Founding Fathers Writing Table* by Silas Kopf, made from wood salvaged at Monticello and Mount Vernon; three fiber sculptures by Norma Minkowitz atop a cherry and maple table by Mark Sfirri.

penstance, she was just a few steps away from the Renwick, so she ducked inside. What could be a more agreeable place for an enthusiast of classic American crafts to take shelter? Since the mid-1970s she had been collecting historically significant quilts that typified indigenous styles, along with handmade duck decoys representative of a centuries-old Chesapeake Bay tradition.

While she waited out the rain, Bresler wandered upstairs to have a look at a new show, the Edward Jacobson collection of turned-wood bowls by pioneers of the fledgling, little-known medium of lathe art. And pow! There it was, the telltale heart flutter. "I was just blown away," she says. "It was instant infatuation, an overwhelming visceral response. I had never seen wood in such an extraordinary range of colors and textures and shapes. What really drew me most intensely was the tactile quality—



wood is an organic, living material, not cold to the touch like marble or glass. I had an insatiable desire to feel the bowls, to hold them in my hands, and had there not been a guard standing by, I wouldn't have been able to resist lifting them out of their display cases. And that was it. I knew I had to own a piece."

SHE WAS NOT the only one. Soon after the exhibition, according to Albert LeCoff, the executive director of the Wood Turning Center in Philadelphia, a group of avid, obsessed collectors emerged—some publicly and some, like Bresler, quietly. Shortly after the show, Bresler bought her first turned-wood vessel at an arts festival. She steadily acquired more works over the next few years, but without the remotest notion of building a museum-quality



ROBERT SEVEN



The medium's innovators include David Ellsworth, whose *Patan* (above) from the 1991 *Solstice Series* employed charred ash and metallic paint, and William Hunter and Marianne Hunter, whose *Evening Blossom* (right), a 1989 ebony work, is embellished with gold, sterling silver, enamel, amethyst, and charoite.

collection or even a collection at all. She was just buying pieces that she liked and wanted to live with. "I went about it very unscientifically—there wasn't an iota of rhyme or reason to what I was doing. I could find inexpensive pieces that had one or two zeros—for \$100 or less, if I made a mistake, so what? But those days are long gone. I'd say the average cost for a piece now is between \$5,000 and \$10,000."

As Bresler's passion for turned wood grew unabated, so did her knowledge of the medium. Contemporary wood art is American crafts' youngest medium, but wood turning itself dates to ancient Egypt: The lathe is the earliest machine tool in history, powered first by humans with a rope, then motorized during the Industrial Revolution. In simplest terms, it spins a piece of wood as the turner roughs out a shape, refines the design with a variety of chisels, then sands and applies a finish. Until the latter part of the 20th century, turned pieces were primarily functional items created for domestic use: bowls, serving platters, spoons, candlesticks.

The contemporary movement got its jump start in the early 1930s when wood

turner James Prestini experimented with lathe technology to blend function with craft in a modernist mode. Other pioneers working through the mid-century explored fresh creative territories. Bob Stocksdale began creating decorative bowls in rare and exotic woods. Rude Osolnik used scrap wood for his vessels, making the decaying irregularities a vital part of the aesthetic allure. During the 1970s, turners such as Edward Moulthrop, David Ellsworth, Mark Lindquist, and William Hunter advanced the field with ever-more-inventive, sophisticated techniques that revolutionized the movement. Moulthrop developed a lathe and tools that enabled him to turn mammoth bowls and goblets. Ellsworth invented blind turning, a method by which he hollowed out interiors through small openings with bent tools he designed to produce eggshell-thin walls. Lindquist broke with the tradition of sanded, smooth surfaces, using a chain saw to cut rough-hewn textures and patterns on vessels. Hunter ruptured the solid surface of his wood vessels to form an elegant, fluted effect.

By the early 1990s, innovative practitioners had pushed the medium far beyond its original utilitarian purpose to the purely aesthetic, one more grounded in sculpture. They had moved past the more understated early lathe pieces—and past the lathe itself—with the addition of extensive carving, wood burning, piercing, color pigments, and secondary materials like gold, silver, and precious stones.

IN 1991, Bresler attended a lecture at the Wood Turning Center in Philadelphia given by the foremost wood art collector in the country, Dr. Irving Lipton, who advised collectors-in-the-making to buy at least two very different pieces from turners they liked, and to follow the evolution of the turners' careers. His counsel was a watershed moment, spurring a more thoughtful approach to her collecting and the purchase of multiple pieces from both established and emerging artists. Her fervor for the craft led her to join the Renwick as a docent in the late 1990s, around the time that she was gaining recognition in the field as a serious collector.

Although she and her husband, Charles, who owned a real estate company, were not joint collectors—this is her addiction, not his—he indulged her ardor despite feeling that their apartment looked as much like a museum as a home. But together the Breslers had long been committed and generous patrons of the arts. In 2003 they made an extraordinary offer to the Renwick. They would give Kenneth R. Trapp, then curator-in-charge, free rein to choose pieces from their wood art collection to complement and strengthen the gallery's own collection. Trapp cherry-



picked 66 turned and carved masterpieces by the best artists in the field, whose combination of technique and imagination had revitalized the medium.

Besides signature works by the preeminent trailblazers, Moulthrop, Ellsworth, Lindquist, and Hunter, there was a cache of pieces by other virtuosic artists executed in a dizzying array of domestic and exotic woods and diversity of styles. Among the most remarkable were works by Michelle Holzapfel, Norm Sartorius, Ron Fleming, and Derek A. Bencomo. Holzapfel is

known for her exquisite post-lathe carved objects and ingenious jewelry for the home, including a sinuous "table bracelet" centerpiece composed of three bowls, three vases, two candleholders, and two clasps. Perhaps more than any other piece in the Bresler collection, it reflects the evolution of wood art away from the earlier conservative forms. Sartorius creates



quirkily beautiful, nonfunctional spoons that the artist describes as sculptures—“not spoons to stir the soup but to stir the soul.” Fleming’s voluptuous, interpretive floral designs are inspired by his wife’s garden, and Bencomo’s dramatic carvings suggest the robust power of nature—from crashing waves to jagged cliffs.

“The Breslers’ gift remains one of the most significant in the history of the Renwick,” says Nicholas Bell, the gallery’s current curator, “and one of the largest of wood art to any institution in the country, to the extent that we now have one of the most comprehensive collections, I would say, in the world.” In conjunction with the exhibition *A Revolution in Wood: The Bresler Collection*, Bell wrote a book of the same name featuring large-scale photos of the 66 pieces that were donated, along with smaller images of all the other wood-based art in the Renwick Gallery’s permanent collection.

A month after the show opened in 2010, Charles Bresler died. After his death, Fleur



endowed Bell’s position, and with that gesture he was given a new title, “The Fleur and Charles Bresler Senior Curator of American Craft and Decorative Art,” a challenge for business cards, but an honor for him.

And last year, the American Craft Council gave Fleur Bresler the Aileen Osborn Webb Award for Philanthropy. “She continues to be one of the most dedicated patrons of contemporary craft in the United States,” says the organization’s education director, Perry Price. “In addition to being a major collector and a financial donor to crafts schools and organizations, she gives of her time by serving on a number of boards. And just as important, she champions the next generation of artists. Fleur is very forward-thinking.”



Morata (far left) by Hugh E. McKay evokes the turbulence of nature in turned madrone burl set with a band of smooth pipestone. A "tribute cabinet" (left) given to Bresler by the Center for Art in Wood is filled with the work of dozens of artists.

ROBERT SEVEN

She has always opened her home to artists and craft devotees from all over the country, and no room is off-limits nor is any artwork considered too precious to touch or hold, for that was just what she wanted to do when she first saw those turned-wood bowls at the Renwick.

"She's passionate about everything and eager to share what she has, but never in a way that could be perceived as pompous or superior," Bell says. "She's a rare combination of sassy, brilliant, courteous, and very down-to-earth."

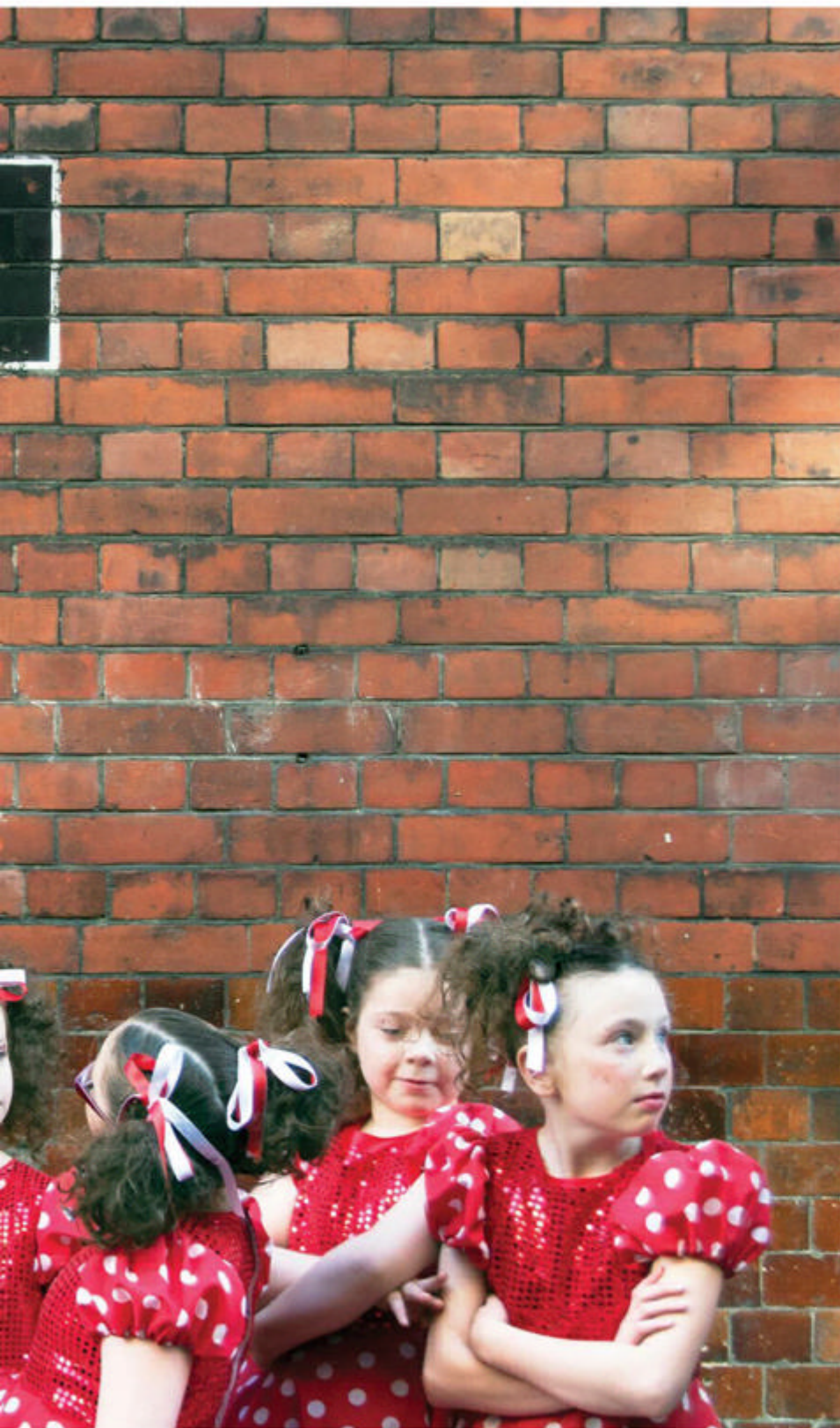
What Bresler loves most about living surrounded by all the pieces she has collected are the memories they evoke and the stories they tell, particularly of her friendships with the artists and their families. Two years ago, she bought the apartment

next to hers and joined it to her existing space, an expansion of 4,000 square feet that allowed her to accommodate larger pieces—her latest obsession is studio furniture and fiber sculpture—and spread out her vast, still growing, collection of wood art. The new space was strictly reconstructed with display in mind, including LED and halogen museum-quality lighting and built-in shelves.

"It's more open and gallery-like," she says. "But I'm sure it will just become cluttered again!" 📌



Sidewalk Superstars



DAVID GIBSON

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY IS STEPPING INTO A THRILLING NEW ERA.

BY SHEILA GIBSON STOODLEY

DAVID GIBSON was walking along Shaftesbury Avenue in the London theater district when he spotted a group of preteen girls disembarking from a bus. They wore identical red dresses with sequined tops and polka-dot puffy sleeves and skirts, and red and white ribbons in their hair. He still does not know why the girls were there on a late February afternoon in 2008, but in truth, it does not matter. Like a true street photographer, Gibson reacted to what he saw. “They wandered to the back of the theater. I just followed them,” he says. He worked fast, taking almost two dozen color photos with his digital Canon 20D during the moment when the girls lined up and waited for the theater doors to open.

He dubbed the best shot *London, 2008*, a title that understates its excellence. In the instant that Gibson chose, the girls’ faces reveal every emotion racing through them: joy, playfulness, boredom, anxiousness, excitement, and perhaps the tiniest hint of stage fright. The No Parking sign above them adds a touch of wry humor. “When I took it, I knew it: It’s probably the photo that defines me,” says Gibson, 58. “Maybe it’s a reward for many years of wandering around.”

Street photography itself is having a great moment too, with a series of record-breaking sales at auction, noteworthy exhibits and documentary films, and new books such as Gibson’s *The Street Photographer’s Manual*. A retrospective on Garry Winogrand, the Bronx-born master of street photography, is on view in Spain after stints at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Joel Meyerowitz, another New York legend, celebrated the 50th anniversary of the dawn of his career with a two-volume book, *Taking My Time*, and is the subject



Landmark images from the early days of street photography include: above, Henri Cartier-Bresson's *Derrière la Gare Saint-Lazare* (1932); below, Alfred Stieglitz's *Winter—Fifth Avenue* (1893); and, opposite page, Eugène Atget's *Boulevard de Strasbourg (Corsets)* (1912). Previous page: David Gibson's *London, 2008*.



of yet another book, *Joel Meyerowitz: Retrospective*, released in February. *Finding Vivian Maier*, a documentary about a mid-20th-century street photographer whose work was discovered after her death, was nominated for an Academy Award this year. *Humans of New York*, a street photography project launched in 2010 that features portraits and stories about thousands of city dwellers, has delighted many as a blog and now a best-selling book. And smartphones and social media have democratized street photography like never before, placing the tools for shooting and sharing into countless new sets of hands.

From the beginning—which can be traced back to the undisputed gods of photography, Alfred Stieglitz, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and André Kertész, to name three—a simple definition of this vital niche has been as elusive as the perfect shot. Many luminaries produced seminal images of urban life, with Exhibit A being Stieglitz's moody 1893 picture *Winter—Fifth Avenue*, which shows the busy Manhattan street rutted with snow as a horse and buggy approach the camera. Street images by revered photographers such as Stieglitz garner the most serious money at auction, and in 2007, Sotheby's London auctioned a mounted carbon print of *Winter—Fifth Avenue* for \$381,000. Cartier-Bresson's iconic *Derrière la Gare Saint-Lazare*, a 1932 Paris scene of a man leaping a puddle, his pose mirrored by a poster of a dancer in the background, fetched almost \$600,000 at Christie's Paris in 2011, a record for the artist. Kertész's *Meudon*, a 1928 masterpiece of contradictory elements, sold for \$420,000 in 2007 at Phillips de Pury (now known as Phillips).

The first great "street photographer" was the Frenchman Eugène Atget, who was active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many of his images feature Parisian vistas, with no people present. An inscribed and stamped example of his 1912 image *Boulevard de Strasbourg (Corsets)*, showcasing a storefront crowded with headless mannequins displaying the stock-in-trade, sold for \$509,000, more than triple its high estimate, in a December auction at Sotheby's New York. Atget also photographed people on the street—and indeed, the auction record for his work depicts an elderly organ grinder and a young girl. Shot circa 1898 to 1899 and sold at Christie's New York in 2010 for \$686,500, *Joueur d'Orgue (Organ Player)* would not strictly count as street photography by modern standards because the technological limits of his equipment required his subjects to pose, and hold their pose, for the length of the exposure. "They were well aware of Atget and his camera," says Howard Greenberg, founder of the eponymous New York photography gallery that handles Atget and many other street masters. "It's very different from walking the street and taking candid photography as you move along."

TRULY CANDID PHOTOGRAPHS were not common until the early to mid 20th century, when technology reduced the size of the camera and increased the film speed. Cartier-Bresson, the godfather of modern street photography,





Vivian Maier's arresting street images, such as the shots above and below, taken in Chicago, created a sensation online before they were embraced by the art world. In December, a record was set for Garry Winogrand, when *Women Are Beautiful* (right) sold for \$125,000 at Sotheby's New York.



began shooting in the 1930s and for years relied on a Leica rangefinder. "Cartier-Bresson was really the first to incorporate the life of the street," Greenberg says. "He called it the 'decisive moment' when all the elements came before him, including the people. In the beginning, it was primarily Cartier-Bresson and everybody learned from him."

Walker Evans never called himself a street photographer, but his explorations of urban life and the New York subways are worthy examples of the form. Between 1938 and 1941, he photographed unwitting subway riders with a camera he concealed in his coat. Greenberg notes that Evans subway pictures have become scarcer in recent years and are climbing in price. One of them, a picture of a grim-faced blonde with a 7th Avenue Local sign over her head, and which was once part of the Art Institute of Chicago's collection, sold for \$40,000 against a \$15,000 high estimate at



OPPOSITE TOP AND BOTTOM: VIVIAN MAIER/MALLOF COLLECTION, COURTESY HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY, NEW YORK; THIS PAGE: THE ESTATE OF GARRY WINOGRAND, COURTESY OF FRAENKEL GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO

Phillips New York in October. Robert Frank, the professional outsider, often turned his camera to the streets for pointed commentaries on American life. His mid-1950s image *South Carolina (Charleston)*, of an African-American woman standing on a sidewalk and holding a white infant, commanded \$497,000 against a \$200,000 high estimate at Sotheby's in December.

The form was pushed forward in the 1960s and 1970s by Garry Winogrand, Joel Meyerowitz, and Lee Friedlander. Winogrand and Friedlander created broader and more complex compositions,

while Meyerowitz embraced color photography when color was suspect—serious photographers stuck with black and white. Friedlander and Winogrand became great friends while treading the streets of New York, and while their work shares a number of similarities, each remains distinct.

“Friedlander, for whom the phrase ‘social landscape’ was coined, he was look-



Camel Coat Couple in Street Steam, New York City, 1975 by Joel Meyerowitz sold for \$23,750 at Phillips New York last year, almost double its high estimate.

ing for something different,” says Frish Brandt, executive director of the Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco, who represents Friedlander and the estate of Winogrand, who died in 1984. “Winogrand was interested in some sort of chaos, messing with the right angles of the photograph. It’s as if he had a sense for the centrifugal energy of the photograph, and he wanted to get as far from order as he could and still have the picture hold together.” In December, a new record was set for Winogrand when *Women Are Beautiful*, a limited-edition portfolio of silver gelatin prints that were shot in the 1960s and 1970s and printed in 1981, sold for \$125,000 at Sotheby’s New York.

Meyerowitz, who quit his art director job after working alongside Robert Frank on a 1962 assignment, explored color in his 1979 book *Cape Light*, an ethereal collection of pictures taken on Cape Cod, Mass. *Camel Coat Couple in Street Steam, New York City, 1975*, a Meyerowitz image of a man and woman with their backs to the

camera who are crossing a busy street and disappearing into the billowing whiteness, fetched \$23,750 at Phillips New York in April 2014, almost double its high estimate. Meyerowitz, 77, has mentored generations of contemporary street photographers, among them Melanie Einzig, who moved from Minnesota to New York in 1990, and Gus Powell, a native of the city.

Einzig’s contributions include the beguiling *Spring Corner, New York City, 2000*, a slice-of-life picture of a black-and-tan dog, a couple embracing, a slumping man shuffling along, and a man with a cockatoo riding on his shoulder. She captured the image on an Olympus Stylus point-and-shoot camera when she was walking home, spotted the man with the bird, and followed him.

She chose to shoot at an angle for several reasons, which she explained in an e-mail: “1. Because I like to do that. 2. It is a way to get everything you want in the frame. 3. It creates triangles in the rectangular frame which is dynamic for the eye. It is possible to tilt too far and it becomes uncomfortable to look at it. Winogrand loosened that up for us by showing us that the horizon line does not have to be straight to make a good photo.”

Powell, long drawn to the sight of construction workers on ladders and scaffolds, included *Putti II* in *The Lonely Ones*, a series he shot between 2005 and 2014 that will be published as a book this fall by J&L Books. The photograph depicts eight workers in shadow on a jungle gym-like structure against a backdrop of leafy trees, tall buildings, and a richly blue, cloudless sky. “It’s more



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Some of the more compelling slices of contemporary life come from photographers Gus Powell and Melanie Einzig. From top, *Massage* by Powell; *Spring Corner, New York City*, 2000 by Einzig; and *Putti II*, from Powell's series *The Lonely Ones*.



than guys on a scaffold," he says. "It's a little bit of surrealism, but it's very simple stuff. It's a bunch of guys trying to get stuff done, but it looked a bit more special that day." Equally spectacular is *Massage*, from his 1999–2007 series *Lunch Pictures*, showing a red-haired woman in a blue suit massaging the neck of a balding man. Both are seated on a park bench and, as with *Putti II*, their faces are not visible. "I would take the picture from the other side if that was interesting to me. I'm interested in gesture and feeling," he says. "For me, that is my *Doisneau Kiss*."

Powell is referring to French photographer Robert Doisneau's *Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville* (*The Kiss by the Hotel de Ville*), a popular black and white of a young couple in a passionate embrace on a busy Paris street. *Massage* was not staged. But decades after *The Kiss* was shot, Doisneau revealed that he had come across a couple kissing and had asked them to repeat the scene for his camera.

Such manipulations don't sit well with Gibson. As he wrote in his 2014 book, *The Street Photographer's Manual*, "Street photography's core value is that it is never set up; this aspect is 'non-negotiable' because the guiding spirit of street photography is that it is real." Gibson understands that his outlook is not universal. "I'm a bit of a purist," he says. "I've been criticized for saying exactly that. But I feel very strongly about that bit. If it's set up, it's not street photography."

That hard line would exclude photographers who seemingly belong to the canon. Brassai, Weegee, and Diane Arbus would fail to make the cut, as would Doisneau. While agreeing with Gibson, Brandt sticks up for worthy exceptions to the rules, such as *The Kiss*.

"If you asked a random sample of people, they would say it is street photography. Does it matter any less that it is posed?" she says. "That's the beauty of art. We don't need to know, necessarily."

PHOTOGRAPHY RESONATES with contemporary audiences partly because the medium is always changing. Technologies blossom and wither, and two recent arrivals, smartphones and social media, are promising to remake street photography. But so far, they are merely that—promising. Gibson, Einzig, and Powell typically carry a camera when they venture out. They also own smartphones, but none of them rank the device as a true camera. Einzig speaks for all three when she explains, "I don't take the photo function that seriously—mostly just to post on Facebook, send to a friend, or photograph a wine label. I know you can probably make good work with these, but I just haven't been taken by it yet."

As for social media, the only notable street photography star it has minted began shooting in the 1950s. Vivian Maier meandered through Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and many other places around the world, capturing wonderful pictures when she was away from her day job as a nanny. Little is known about her training or her opinions on her work; she left undeveloped a fair portion of the 100,000-plus pictures that she took. She died in 2009, the same year John Maloof, a Chicago historian, posted



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a group of Maier pictures on Flickr, and things exploded from there.

Maloof had stumbled across Maier when he purchased a box of negatives at a Chicago auction house for around \$400, hoping they would be relevant to a book on local history that he was writing. When it was clear he had something far better, he

became Maier's champion. Greenberg, who now represents her, says, "She's as classic a street photographer as you can imagine."

With smartphones and social media making street photographers of us all, the real innovation will be figuring out how to manage the flood spraying from the fire hose. "What remains to be seen is how we judge the truly successful," Brandt says. "What criteria will we use? It changed in the past. It probably will in the future." ■

A Show for Every Street

THIS SPRING, the aisles of the annual Association of International Photography Art Dealers show in New York (aipad.com) will be alive with street photography from around the world. The 35th edition of the fair, taking place from April 16 to 19 at the Park Avenue Armory, will draw 89 national and international exhibitors, among them Howard Greenberg Gallery of New York, which intends to bring examples by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Joel Meyerowitz, André Kertész, and Vivian Maier.

Taka Ishii Gallery of Tokyo will feature the works of Katsumi Watanabe, who made the Shinjuku section of the Japanese metropolis his happy hunting grounds in the 1960s and 1970s, capturing portraits of gangsters, drag queens, and bar hostesses. Keith de Lellis Gallery of New York will have mid-20th-century photos by Dutch street photographers, including a delightful untitled black and white by Joan van der Keuken of a couple dancing in the street while life goes on around them. Gitterman Gallery of New York will have Garry Winogrand's brooding 1957 picture *Victor Riesel, Labor Racketeer* *Foe*, and Throckmorton Fine Art of New York will showcase street photography by Cuban-born Mario Algaze, shot in Cuba and Peru from 1999 to 2002. —S.G.S.



On view at AIPAD's spring show will be Garry Winogrand's *Victor Riesel, Labor Racketeer Foe*, from 1957, at the Gitterman Gallery, and Wim van der Linden's untitled street image, circa 1955, at Keith de Lellis Gallery.



TOP: THE ESTATE OF GARRY WINOGRAND; BOTTOM: KEITH DE LELLIS GALLERY, NEW YORK

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The Hennessy vineyards in France's Cognac region are the starting place for spirits that may spend centuries in the barrel.



YOU WOULD NEVER know it was an unusually warm October day from the depths of the Hennessy Founder's Cellar, where my skin prickled in the damp darkness—not just from the sacred chill in the air, but also from the secrets that I was uncovering in the heart of France's Cognac region. I had entered into one of the region's most prized Cognac cellars, the holding place for eaux-de-vie made centuries ago. Some of the spirits slept in rows of weathered oak barrels, gaining complexity and character with each passing season. Others dozed in rotund glass demijohns known as *Dames Jeannes*, their age suspended as if in a time capsule.

As one of France's oldest and most successful Cognac houses, and since 1987 part of the LVMH group, Hennessy is the world's largest producer of Cognac. It sells more than 55 million bottles per year around the world, according to Euro-monitor International, a market research group, and is the best-selling Cognac in the United States. Eight generations of Hennessys have overseen the brand, along with seven generations of master blenders from the Fillioux family. As a result, its spirits are known for their consistency of taste, quality, and style. Every Hennessy VS—or Very Special, the youngest blend of which is aged at least two years—tastes like the previous bottling of VS, while every



ANTHONY ELIOT



Clockwise from top left:
A 1762 Gautier Cognac
that sold for nearly
\$60,000 at Bonhams
New York last year;
Hennessy's Château de
Baignolet dates to 1810
and houses the brand's
most prestigious guests;
a portrait of founder
Richard Hennessy in his
French army uniform
circa 1750.



VSOP—Very Special Old Pale, at least four years old but usually much older—tastes like previous VSOPs, and so on. Cognac's complexity and character develop steadily over time: Floral and fruit aromas intensify and tannins become soft and supple as the spirit's components integrate as it rests in the barrel. This is why mature Cognacs are a great draw for collectors who know the depth of character that can reside within the bottle.

Like most collectibles, Cognac has had ebbs and flows of interest over the years. The cigar vogue of the 1990s bolstered Cognac not only as a drink but also as a prized addition to the cellar. Today, the thriving cocktail culture has created a growing appreciation for fine and rare spirits and Cognac has been swept up in

the fervor. Last year in the United States, Cognac sales were up 12 percent in volume, with total imports of about 50 million bottles, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States. But volume and exports tend to not matter to collectors, who focus on rare bottles or limited-edition releases that are unlikely to attract the average consumer.

Collectible Cognacs generally fall into three categories. The first includes new, limited-edition releases that feature a blend of well-matured eaux-de-vie from a producer's reserve stocks. They often come in elaborate crystal decanters or unique, artistic vessels. Some of the most noteworthy examples are Frapin Cuvée 1888, Rémy Martin Louis XIII Black Pearl, and Delamain Le Voyage.

The second category comprises younger, limited-edition serial releases and bottlings from a particular cru, single cask, or single estate. The Forgotten Casks is a special bottling from Henry Preiss, founder and CEO of HPS Epicurean, who created the series in collaboration with Jean-Pierre Cointreau and Alain Royer. "The Cognac is produced by blending select older Cognacs in small batches," Preiss says. "Every release features a different combination of ages and regions that yield their own character and style." Another exceptional choice in this category is Réviseur XO. Produced with grapes sourced solely from a single estate in the Petit Champagne cru, the Cognac won gold at the 2014 International Wine and Spirits Competition in the XO category.

The third and perhaps most intriguing category is exceptionally old releases in their original packaging. Surprisingly, these bottles, which can be more than 200 years old, are often purchased by connoisseurs who are not looking for a showpiece—they intend to drink them. At the French company Oxygénée, owner David Nathan-Maister works with customers via the Finest & Rarest division to locate vintage bottles that can "create a time capsule experience." Fortunately, the spirit's high alcohol content acts as a life preserver, which means, as Nathan-Maister puts it, "You can expect an old Cognac to taste between very good and mind-blowing, as long as it's been stored properly."

Recently, these super-old Cognacs have been fetching high prices at auction. Last year, an exceedingly rare bottle of 1762



Clockwise from top left: Oxygénée's Finest & Rarest division helps collectors find exceptionally aged Cognacs such as this 1758 bottle; Hennessy uses a pipette called a *fusil* to draw portions of its eaux-de-vie; Paradis Cognac can age in oak and demijohns for more than a century; Hennessy's distillery uses copper stills designed specifically for Cognac.



ESTATE: JEAN-PIERRE BOST; PORTRAIT: COLLECTION HISTORIQUE HENNESSY; FUSIL: JACQUES VEREMANS; BARRELS: TODD SELBY; DISTILLERY: ANTOINE BAGOT

Five Cognacs to Covet



Here are five Cognacs that will enhance any collection.

◀ PIERRE FERRAND COLLECTION PRIVÉE 1914

In 1914, when many men left home to fight World War I, the women of Grande Champagne joined together to distill the wine that had been made earlier in the year. After aging in Limousin oak casks and resting in demijohns for nearly a century, the resulting Cognac became Pierre Ferrand Collection Privée 1914. Each 750 ml bottle is numbered and signed by the cellar master and includes a certificate of authenticity countersigned by an officer of justice. (\$1,500, cognacpierre.ferrand.com)



◀ FRAPIN CUVÉE 1888 COGNAC

A spiral of 24-karat gold thread embraces the stunning decanter of Frapin Cuvée 1888, a Cognac that was created to honor the company's esteemed founder, Pierre Frapin. Select pre-1888 eaux-de-vie from Grande Champagne were blended to produce only 1,888 700 ml bottles of this limited-edition Cognac, which features a high proportion of Folle Blanche. (\$6,000, cognac-frapin.com)



◀ RÉMY MARTIN LOUIS XIII BLACK PEARL ANNIVERSARY EDITION

In 1874, the House of Rémy Martin pioneered the super-premium Cognac category by releasing Louis XIII, an exceptional Cognac that gained worldwide recognition at the Paris World's Fair in 1900. In celebration of the blend's 140th anniversary, Rémy Martin has released 775 individually numbered 750 ml bottles of Louis XIII Black Pearl Anniversary Edition, a blend of nearly 1,200 eaux-de-vie sourced from Grande Champagne that range from 40 to 100 years old. (\$25,000, remymartin.com)



◀ CHAPTERS OF AMPERSAND ET NO 1

A collaboration between Tiffon Cognac, the master blender Folke Andersson, and the Swedish crystal artist Göran Wärff resulted in Chapters of Ampersand's Et No 1, a striking piece of art. A blend of Grande Champagne eaux-de-vie from 1974 and 1943 has been combined with pre-phyloxera Cognac from 1870 to create a 300-bottle collector's item. Each 750 ml bottle is numbered and signed and includes a certificate of origin. (\$8,395, chaptersofampersand.com)



◀ HENNESSY 250 COLLECTOR BLEND

In April, Hennessy marks its 250th anniversary with this limited-release 1-liter bottle. The master blender Yann Fillioux and his team created an ideal marriage of eaux-de-vie that were aged in 250 250-liter barrels beneath the banks of the river Charente. (\$600, hennessy.com) — S.R.D.

Gautier Cognac fetched nearly \$60,000 at Bonham's New York. The slightly misshapen, handblown glass bottle was coated in cellar grime, with no alcohol content noted on the handwritten label. "There has always been an interest in Cognac," says Richard Harvey, the head of Bonhams' wine department, singling out releases from the early 19th century such as 1802, 1811, and 1812, "which were mostly bottled in the early 20th century to meet the tastes of Edwardian England. . . . But there is also demand for the premium blends produced by the major Cognac firms, such as Rémy Martin's Louis XIII."

AFTER WE EMERGED from the Hennessy Founder's Cellar into the welcome warmth of the bright October sunshine, we headed to the house's Le Peu vineyard to catch a glimpse of the season's last grapes being harvested. There are almost 200,000 acres of vineyards in the Cognac AOC, the second-largest wine region in France after Bordeaux. Located 100 miles north of Bordeaux in the Charente and Charente-Maritime districts, Cognac is subdivided into six crus: Grande Champagne, Petit Champagne, Borderies, Fins Bois, Bons Bois, and Bois Ordinaires (or Bois à Terroir). The crus surround the town of Cognac and are differentiated primarily by the soil and climatic conditions.

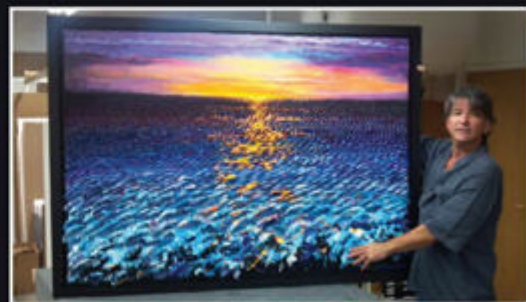
On the day I visited the distillery, Hennessy was pressing Ugni Blanc grapes, which would be distilled into eau-de-vie after fermentation. As the bladder press hummed, I was offered a sample of freshly fermented wine. Cold and sharp, it made my mouth sting with acidity. As a result of its light body and high acid content, Ugni Blanc (also known as Trebbiano) makes excellent eau-de-vie that is ideal for aging. Prior to phylloxera, the devastating aphid that destroyed nearly 6.2 million acres of French vineyards from 1870 to 1890, Cognac was made primarily with Folle Blanche grapes. But Folle Blanche was difficult to grow, so once the blight was over, farmers replanted their vineyards with Ugni Blanc and today it is Cognac's most plentiful grape.



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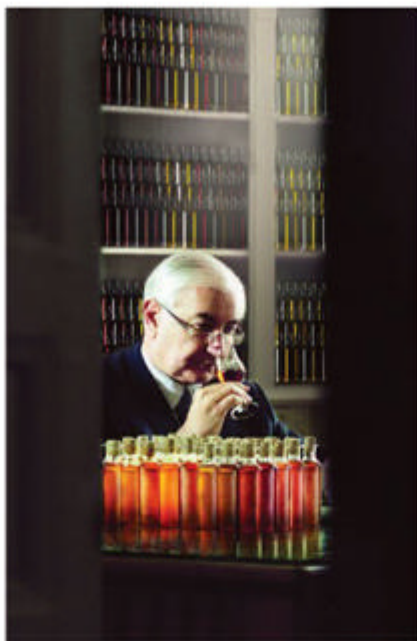


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Yann Fillioux, Hennessy's master blender, tastes eaux-de-vie daily to ensure quality and consistency. Fillioux is a seventh-generation master blender—a role he trained for since he was 19 years old.



But many aficionados believe that Folle Blanche produced a far superior spirit and as a result, there has been a recent surge in collectors seeking vintage bottles from the pre-*phylloxera* era. “Very old Cognac has an undeniable cult following,” Nathan-Maister says. “Some people become obsessed with it because Folle Blanche creates a Cognac that is much more nuanced.”

Today's Cognac is made primarily with Ugni Blanc, plus some Folle Blanche and Colombard grapes. After they are harvested, pressed, and fermented, they undergo a double distillation. The first pass allows the distiller to discard impurities

and select the best part of the run. The second distillation, known as *la bonne chauffe*, refines the eau-de-vie. This all transpires in a special copper pot still developed in the Charente region. After distillation, the eau-de-vie is put into oak barrels from the Tronçais or Limousin regions to begin its long loll. The Cognac is around 144 proof when it goes into the barrel, but as it ages, a small amount of evaporation occurs and the distiller will use this opportunity to add water and reduce the alcohol level to a more manageable 80 proof. Modern Cognac is usually bottled at this level, although older Cognac was often released at higher levels.

Although virtually every aspect of production is regulated by French law, there are numerous opportunities for Cognac producers to create a distinct style, and these styles and even individual bottles vary in the way they evolve over time. In general, as Cognac ages, it loses its youthful fruity tang on both palate and nose and acquires broader, deeper, and more complex notes tending toward layered sensations of toffee, fig, and a lingering impression of oak. The more time in the barrel, the more these disparate components meld together, resulting in a seamlessly hedonistic elixir.

The higher alcohol of older Cognacs will often make them noticeably richer and more satiny on the palate, with a longer and more opulent finish. And do not discount the visceral impact of tasting a very aged bottle. “Some of these Cognacs were produced when Marie Antoinette was alive,” says Nathan-Maister. “Drinking an old Cognac can be an emotional, nearly religious experience that you’ll likely never forget.”

THIS DAY AT HENNESSY, the future lay in the hands of Yann Fillioux. For seven generations, the Fillioux family has been working with Hennessy to perfect the art of blending eaux-de-vie. Today, Yann Fillioux reigns as Hennessy's master blender, a role he began training for at the age of 19. Now 68, he rises each morning to meet with Hennessy's *Comité de Dégustation*, the tasting committee that samples and blends hundreds of eaux-de-vie. “Hennessy is all about continuity of quality,” says Fillioux. “It's important that we prepare for the next generation of Cognacs by choosing eaux-de-vie that will age well into the future.”

In 2010, Fillioux reconstructed the bespoke blend that was presented to the Russian czar Alexander I in 1818. Originally created by Jean Fillioux, the Cognac has been reborn as Hennessy's highly collectible Paradis Impérial. Featuring eaux-de-vie aged up to 130 years, the Cognac resides inside a Baccarat crystal decanter with a collar made of silver and 18-karat gold.

But Fillioux's next special release will be even more meaningful for the house: This year, Hennessy celebrates its 250th anniversary, and in April it will mark the milestone with the Hennessy 250 Collector Blend, a limited release that combines about 100 eaux-de-vie that were aged in 250 250-liter barrels in the Founder's Cellar. “We have always lived to the rhythms of Cognac in my family,” explains Yann Fillioux. “This blend of eaux-de-vie forms the ultimate Cognac, one of great distinction that is full of life and intensity.”

A Vintage Guide

Here are Cognac's primary age designations, which must appear on each label.

VS: Very Special (or Very Superior). The youngest eau-de-vie in the blend is aged at least two years.

VSOP: Very Special (or Very Superior) Old Pale. Each eau-de-vie is aged at least four years, but is typically much older.

NAPOLÉON: Aged at least six years, but typically aged 20 years or longer.

XO: Extra Old. Aged a minimum of six years but typically much older, with the average at least 20 years old. On April 10, 2016, the age grading of XO will change to a minimum of 10 years.

HORS D'ÂGE: Translates to “beyond age.” The eaux-de-vie are at least 20 years old, but can include selections that are 30, 50, or even 100 years old. —S.R.D.

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For those who love championship golf, gracious living and all the amenities of a country club community, The Virginian Golf Club offers an idyllic and unparalleled setting. Here, on nearly 600 acres in the highlands of southwest Virginia, a select group of homeowners from throughout North America enjoys a lifestyle enriched by exquisitely designed estate homes, a well-appointed clubhouse, an active social calendar and the pleasures of a Tom Fazio-designed course.

"In conceiving The Virginian, its ownership had two preoccupations: to earn the respect of those who appreciate an uncommonly fine golf course, and to earn the respect of those who appreciate tradition, fellowship and pride of ownership," says Kenny Kerr, general manager of The Virginian. "This is an exceptional community that takes pride in its respect for civility and quality of life, an ideal that regrettably strikes many as becoming relegated to the history books."

And now, with a selection of new real estate opportunities, prospective club members have the chance of owning at The Virginian and becoming a part of this legendary community.

At Vineyard Terraces, owners will enjoy a European-style neighborhood set within a terraced landscape. Among its most notable features—an edible landscape with a vineyard trellis system that will not only grow wine grapes, but table grapes, raspberries, blackberries and currants. Fruiting shrubs, such as blueberries and cranberries, along with apple and fig trees, will also be incorporated into the landscape. The design team has reached out to leading vineyard consultants to assist in the layout of the trellises and the selection of the fruits to ensure their success.

The first of the 36 residences are now complete at Vineyard Terraces, which will face the fairway at the 7th and 8th greens. Exteriors will be a combination of brick, stucco and slate with oversized casement

windows on the front and sides and a large expanse of glass looking out onto the golf course. Homes will also include a brick-enclosed motor court and expansive decks. Prices for residences in Vineyard Terraces, which will range from 2,600 to 4,600 square feet, start at \$749,000.

The Grandview neighborhood, with 30 home sites and one home currently under construction, boasts splendid views down the 9th and 18th fairways with the elegant Virginian clubhouse in the background. A few additional lots along Washington Way, just past the 6th tee, will also open for sale, offering some of the best off-course lots at The Virginian. Home sites start at \$180,000 in Grandview and \$100,000 along Washington Way.

While the golf-course views are sublime so are the links themselves. "We made no compromises at The Virginian," says Tom Fazio, who has more courses ranked among the Top 100 in the United States than any other designer. "Each hole is unique, with its own special challenge for the golfer. The Virginian's land is one of those areas of great natural beauty, with a high knoll as the course's obvious starting point."

And while The Virginian is a self-contained community, with plenty of dining options and cultural events, nearby towns offer abundant pleasures. It's just a short drive to Abingdon, Virginia, which was founded in 1778 and is distinguished by some 200 lovingly tended examples of National and Federal-style architecture. Abingdon is also home to the acclaimed Barter Theater. Best known for NASCAR's Bristol Motor Speedway, "The World's Fastest Half-Mile Track," Bristol also has its roots in Colonial America, but is better known for a later era, which brought about what is now recognized as "The Birthplace of Country Music."



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Pursuits

ADVENTURES FOR THE AFICIONADO



Big-Fish Story

On Mexico's Riviera Nayarit, blue-water hunters go eye-to-eye with giants of the deep.

BY JENNIFER ASHTON RYAN

WHEN THE WAKE-up call rang at 6 am, my eyes were wide open and my nerves on edge. In an hour, I would meet a catamaran that would take me 16 miles out to sea, where I would dive into open ocean and try to spear a gigantic fish.

The sport—called blue-water hunting—is practiced around the world, but I was giving it a go in the clear sparkling sea off of Mexico's lush Riviera Nayarit. Here, tuna, wahoo, and marlin can tip the scales at nearly 1,000 pounds. If you go hunting and are lucky, you will see one. If you are luckier, you will land one with a spear. During my visit here last year, a group of Brazilian guys ("office bellies,"

Sebastian Melani, one of the world's top blue-water hunters, swims to the surface with a wahoo speared off the coast of Mexico.

Pursuits



my guide called them) shot a 686-pound blue marlin. The general manager of the St. Regis Punta Mita, where the Brazilians and I were staying, showed me a picture of the fish on his iPhone. It was as tall, and nearly as wide, as the Brazilian who caught it.

On that trip, I hunted in shallower waters just swimming distance from shore. My “speargun” was loaded with thick rubber bands and the reef was swimming with easy targets. I floated over it with a snorkel mask on and easily popped off fish the size of two of my outstretched hands. I came home with dinner that the St. Regis’s chefs prepared as a personal feast of sashimi, ceviche, fish tacos, and fillet.

But today was blue-water hunting. I could come home with dinner for 400.

THIS TIME, there would be no easy targets: Giant pelagic fish swim up from the depths for the chum line that blue-water hunters release, more curious than scared. Hunters holding their breath 40 feet underwater cannot see the bottom, the surface, or any other reference point. When a fish comes up to take a good look, hunters are advised—in order to gauge the fish’s size—to compare the eye to the body. The smaller the eye appears, the larger the fish actually is.

Hunters ideally wait for a clean shot behind the gills, though fish this size rarely die with one shot; their adrenaline sets in and they take off swimming for their lives. So the hunter throws the gun to the people on the boat and everyone springs into action: The fish takes off, trailing a line connected to a buoy. The boat chases the buoy until it slows down, and then the hunter gets back in the water and takes a second shot. Spearfishing world records accept a second spear as long as it is loaded and fired by the hunter.

As I walked out of my room and down the beach to meet my guide, the ocean looked especially lurid by the predawn light of the moon. Sebastian Melani, the founder of Spearmex (formerly called Punta Mita Expeditions) and a world-record-holding blue-water hunter himself, was waiting. He offered his hand as I swung my bare feet over the side of the 30-foot catamaran *Spearo 2*. I spied the Riffe spearguns huddled together at the stern, leaning up against twin Suzuki 175 hp four-stroke outboards.

“The low pressure today makes for excellent conditions,” Melani said. “It brings the big tuna up to the surface.”

We pulled away from the sandy beach just as the sun was meeting the horizon, a postcard silhouette of palm trees and mountain ridges. Tropical Storm Simon, off the coast, was expected to be the last one of the season. The El Niño year had brought warmer waters and a parade of storms, so Melani had asked his spearfishing clients to stay away throughout September. After Simon, the satellite map was clear of weather systems down to Panama.

“I have 2,500 fans on Facebook, waiting,” said Melani, who charges \$1,500 for an eight-hour day of blue-water hunting for up to four people, gear included. “As soon as I post a picture of the first big catch, the season will officially be started.” Melani’s



Mexico's clear waters are swimming with mahi (above) and tuna. This tuna (right) weighed in at 230 pounds.

Bobbie K. Carlyle

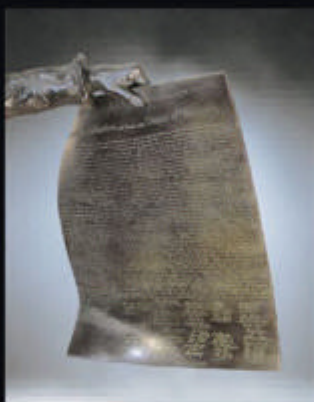
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*Through the endless blue,
I glimpsed the silver flashes of
a school of sizable wahoo.*

clients across the globe would start organizing immediately. To have a world-class, all-inclusive spearfishing operation launching from a five-star resort makes it extremely convenient and popular. “After that picture is posted, I will have 150 to 200 bookings almost instantly.”

Today, October 4, could be the first day of a season that runs through March—if we spear a big one and I do not turn as blue as the water in panic.

TRYING TO CATCH DINNER with a sharpened stick is certainly nothing new; there are references to spearfishing that date back to ancient Egypt. In the 1920s, swimmers off of Italy and France started using goggles to better see and spear fish underwater. Modern scuba diving started in the 1930s thanks to spearfishing, and during the 1960s there was a campaign to make spearfishing an Olympic sport.

Spearfishing fell out of popularity after not receiving the Olympic nod, and the sport has yet to organize like scuba diving has with its PADI certification and worldwide teaching standards. Instead, spearfishing remains something hunters mostly learn from their fathers or from a friend with a boat. On the website spearboard.com, hunters organize informally to discuss everything from gear to charter trips. When Melani launched his Discover Spearfishing course in 2010, he did not know of another program like it.

Back on land, the St. Regis Punta Mita offers blue-water hunters unusually luxurious accommodations. Amenities include the Jack Nicklaus-designed Pacifico golf course (above) and Mexican cuisine at Las Marietas restaurant (top).



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Rules and regulations about spearfishing vary greatly across the globe. It is usually considered unfair and is often illegal to wear scuba gear while hunting, so blue-water hunters double as expert free divers. Novices can usually learn to reach 30 feet with less than a day's training; experts, like Melani, dive to 100 feet or

more and can easily stay underwater for 2.5 minutes. The office belly last year was no more than 25 feet down when he shot that marlin.

Melani learned to spearfish in Patagonia where he grew up. He studied marine biology in college and was hired in 2000 as a scuba instructor for the Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita. He moved to Mexico to chase big fish and has since met clients with similar ambitions. Sitting next to me on the catamaran is

Water World

BLUE-WATER HUNTING usually involves an uncomfortable overnight on rustic liveaboards or in beach tents. But a few choice spots around the world, such as the St. Regis Punta Mita, provide access to the big fish—and extremely plush accommodations.

► KONA COAST, HAWAII

On the Big Island, guests at the **Four Seasons Resort Hualālai at Historic Ka'ūpūlehu** (808.325.8000, fourseasons.com/hualalai) meet Rob White, owner of **Blue Water Hunter** (808.331.2237, bluewaterhunter.com), at Honokohau Harbor, a 10-minute drive from the resort. Blue-water charters, priced from \$800 for up to four people, operate year-round from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm. White runs a 20-foot Twin Vee, powered by twin 90 hp Yamaha four-stroke motors, to blue water as close as 15 minutes offshore, where mahimahi is the most commonly pursued catch, though ahi, ono, uku, and shark are also local. “The chance that we will see a shark is very high,” says White, who is something of a shark whisperer in his own right. “If you shoot a fish and a shark arrives on the scene, it is my job to swim down and bump the shark.” White assures us that only one or two fish are lost annually to sharks—and no humans.

► PAJE BEACH, ZANZIBAR, TANZANIA

In 2014, an 11-villa paradise opened on the famed kitesurfing beach Paje in Zanzibar. If a private pool is not enough, when tides permit, **Zanzibar White Sand Luxury Villas & Spa** (+255.776.263.451, whitesandvillas.com) allows guests to launch a blue-water hunting excursion directly from the resort. The outfitter **Extreme Blue Water Spearfishing** (+255.7871.38642, extremebewaterpearfishing.com) operates a dive center 15 minutes



Mahi catch in Hawaii

by car from the resort. From August to mid-December and from late February through March are the best times to hunt in the Indian Ocean's warm, clear waters. Equipment can be rented from the local Dunga Dive Store and delivered to the resort. The outfitter's co-owners Eric Allard and Nigel Spencer began spearfishing together at age 8 on the coast of Kenya, where they grew up. Allard says clients should expect sharks but likely will not see them. “An encounter with a shark is always a privilege,” he says. “Shark presence indicates a healthy ecosystem and, in turn, other big fish.” Full-day blue-water charters are priced from \$300, including equipment, for up to four people.

► BAY OF ISLANDS, NEW ZEALAND

On New Zealand's North Island, the 22-suite **Lodge at Kauri Cliffs** (+64.9.407.0010, kauricliffs.com) overlooks the picturesque Bay of Islands—home to world-record-breaking blue-water hunting catches including a 650-pound bluefin tuna and a 650-pound striped marlin. **Spearfishing Charters** (+64.21.632.080, spearfishingcharters.co.nz) principal, Sebastian Kramer, coordinates charters throughout the year by request with launches near Kauri Cliffs. For \$120 for up to five people, Kramer provides a guide and a 20-foot hardtop Senator, powered by a Yamaha 150 four-stroke engine, for the day. Hunters can arrange to rent or buy equipment in advance and wear thick wetsuits in pursuit of snapper and yellowtail kingfish. “Big kingfish up to 90 pounds get landed every now and then,” says Kramer. “They are more common in the summer months between November and March.” Orcas, sunfish, and an occasional mako shark show up among the pelagic species. Closer to shore, hunters can dive for local snack foods: abalone, sea urchin, and green-lipped mussels. —J.A.R.



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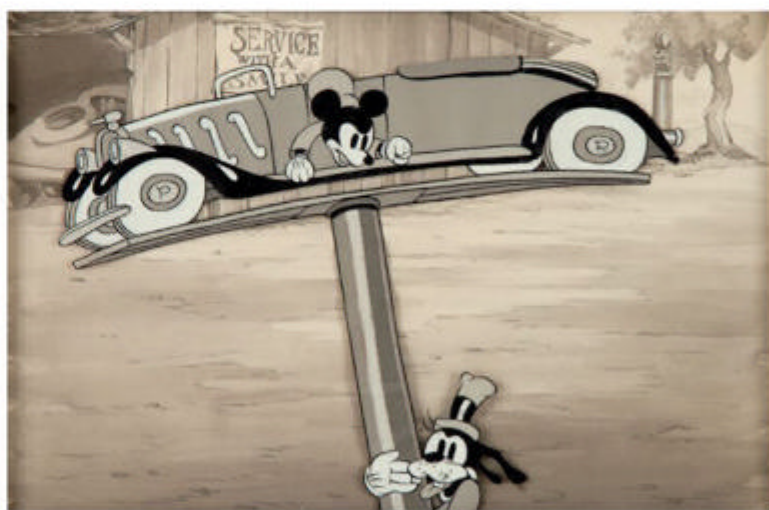
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42-year-old Alejandro Andrés, a champion free diver and founder of the first free-diving academy in Argentina. Andrés joined Punta Mita Expeditions in 2014 to help Melani launch Mexico's first free-diving and spearfishing school. His personal free-immersion free-diving record is 270 feet.

LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER we reached La Corbeteña, a rocky seamount that attracts abundant marine life. Unique among blue-water hunting grounds, Corbeteña does not generally draw sharks. In more than 10 years, Melani has seen only a few hammerheads. Record catches for Punta Mita

Expeditions clients in 2013 included a 318-pound yellowfin tuna, an 800-pound blue marlin, and a 620-pound black marlin.

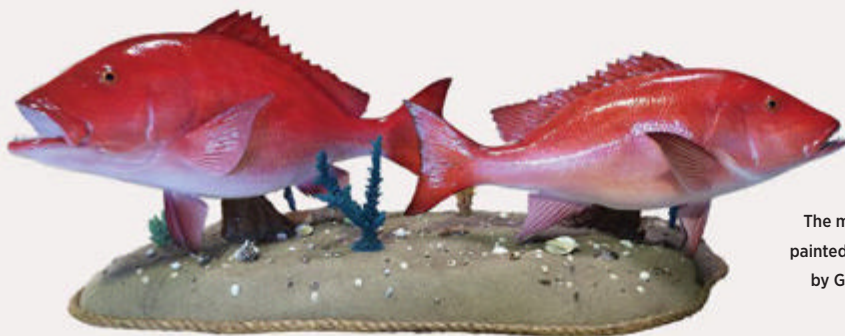
Melani and Andrés used fishing poles to quickly catch two days' worth of bonito for chum. Wearing fins, a snorkel mask, and an ocean-camouflage rash guard, I jumped into the open ocean after Andrés, while Melani and another client, a blond boat captain from San Diego, swam to the other side of the boat. Melani started a chum line, standard practice for blue-water hunters.

Before we began our first drift, Andrés taught me the graceful free-diver kick. He made it look easy, almost flying down through the water like a bird, while I splashed around at the surface, struggling against my own buoyancy. The next time he went under, I noted his launch—then rocked my body forward and perpendicular to the surface. My center of gravity shifted and suddenly I cut like a knife through the water and headed straight down. Far beneath the surface, everything seemed to melt away and the panic I anticipated alone in the open ocean

A Marlin For the Mantel

THE MOST COMMON trophies in blue-water hunting are dinner and a photograph of a hunter—sunburned and grinning—holding a catch nearly as big as she is. But when Sebastian Melani's clients want something more, he recommends Gray Taxidermy in Pompano Beach, Fla. (954.785.6456, graytaxidermy.com). The 50-year-old company draws on its library of more than 10,000 fish molds to match the length and weight of a catch. Gray requests the fish's type, length, and weight, and a photo to reference during the paint job—though the bill, teeth, and fins of the catch can be incorporated into the trophy.

In taxidermy, fish are the most difficult animals to preserve. The skins of bass and other warmwater fish are commonly used, but saltwater fish are almost always re-created using artificial materials. At Gray's, the fish mold is coated with several layers of fiberglass. Real or replica bills, teeth, and fins are attached, a hand-painted glass eye is placed, and an in-house master painter makes the fish mount come to life. For a 100-pound tuna measuring around 60 inches, the cost starts at about \$1,000. For a 100-pound wahoo measuring around 78 inches, pricing starts at about \$1,100. —J.A.R



The modern trophy fish is actually a custom-painted fiberglass mold, such as these examples by Gray Taxidermy in Pompano Beach, Fla.



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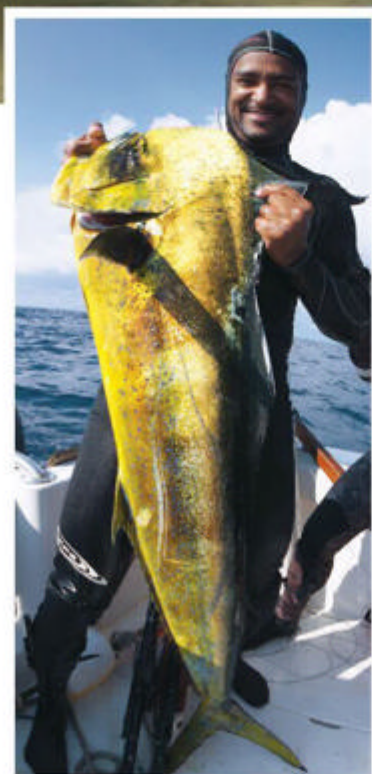


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Pursuits



A photo with the big one is the true trophy. Clockwise from top left: Melani poses with snappers; a mahi swims off the shores of Mexico; a 230-pound tuna is speared behind the gills; a 95-pound amberjack is caught during a Punta Mita Expeditions dive; and a relatively modest mahi will still make for a big dinner.

did not take hold. Instead, a sense of peace, even bliss, washed over me. Oxygen deprivation? Perhaps. But I had entered an entirely new realm.

Through the endless blue, I glimpsed the silver flashes of a school of sizable wahoo—and Melani and the San Diegan down with them at fish-eye level, spearguns loaded. There was a snap as the San Diegan's gun fired. No hit.

A sea turtle glided by, then a big yellowfin tuna, and more long silvery wahoo coming up from the depths. There were more shots taken, but none of us caught the big one that afternoon, though you could not tell from the sunny mood on the boat ride back to shore. A day spent in transcendent, clear water is hardly disappointing.

Back home, I began scanning Punta Mita Expeditions' Facebook page. On October 16, there it was: "A fun few days of #diving with Fabio from San Pablo," read the caption. And there was the shot: Melani and Fabio each hold a wahoo nearly as tall as he is.

Next year, that shot is mine. 📷

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TOP: CENTER: CAMERON KIRKCONNELL; TOP RIGHT: DIEGO SANTIAGO; CENTER: PEDRO PAZ; BOTTOM: SEBASTIAN MELANI

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Completely gated Spanish style home located in Miami Beach boasting over 4,200 sf. 5 BR, 4.5 baths. High cathedral ceilings and great areas for entertaining. New roof, original terrazzo and wood floors. Room for a pool. **\$1,249,000.** Gaby Dajer.
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NAPLES/MARCO ISLAND, FL

Frank Lloyd Wright inspired contemporary home with pool and spa, offering complete privacy in a luxury gated beachfront island community with tennis, golf, croquet, fitness, clubhouse and dining. **\$4,725,000.** Michelle Thomas.

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NAPLES/MARCO ISLAND, FL

Spectacular waterfront home with amazing bay views and walking distance to the beach. Superior construction, elevator, expansive windows, pool, spa, outdoor kitchen, large dock with boat lift and jet ski lifts. **\$3,085,000.** Michelle Thomas.

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SNELLVILLE, GA

Breathtaking private, custom estate on 17± acres w/ stunning entertainment complex offering a 24-seat Moroccan-style theater and full indoor basketball court. The exquisite outdoor space will delight in every way. **\$5,300,000.** Dietre Ffrench.

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SEA BRIGHT, NJ

Spectacular waterfront 6 BR, 6.5 bath home nestled between the river and the beach, graced with stunning views. Custom kitchen, coffered ceilings, 2-story stone fireplace, water rights, private access, minutes to NYC ferry. **\$3,100,000.**

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SANTA FE, NM

Classic hilltop compound with three homes on 7.4 acres enjoying majestic views of mountain ranges, mature landscaping, a private pond, equestrian facilities, and a pool, this estate offers endless possibilities. **\$8,400,000.** Chris Webster.

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SANTA FE, NM

One of the most extraordinary custom estates in the Santa Fe area, this 5 BR, 7 bath home is located in the renowned Las Campanas community, known for its recreational amenities and magnificent mountain views. **\$4,850,000.** Chris Webster.

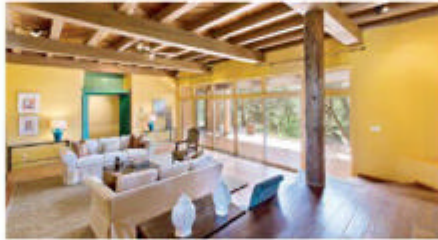
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SANTA FE, NM

Contemporary masterpiece – A truly magnificent 7,655 sf, 3 BR sophisticated hilltop estate sited on 12.6 acres with mesmerizing city and mountain panorama views and privacy. Includes an in-ground lap pool. **\$3,900,000.** Chris Webster.

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SANTA FE, NM

Privacy envelopes this handsome, comfortable home on over 6 tree-covered acres: box seats for incredible, multi-layered mtn views. Expansive property includes a main house/guesthouse w/ kitchenette plus art studio. Price upon request. Chris Webster.

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GARDNERVILLE, NV

Mottsville Meadows Ranch near Lake Tahoe. This family compound features 3 homes w/ main house, guesthouse & barn w/ caretaker unit. The 20 acre parcel offers room for livestock w/ stream, pond and 51 acres of water rights. Anne Marie Sear.

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NEW YORK, NY

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PARK CITY, UT

Like a rare piece of art, this residence conveys a lifestyle for the connoisseur of harmonious surroundings and self-expression. This treasure is positioned on the 14th tee of the Glenwild golf course. Price upon request. Mary Ciminelli.

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Precious Settings

BY VICTORIA GOMELSKY

A *CLOAK OF SECRECY* has long kept the jewelry trade—and its cache of small, precious objects—hidden from public view. But recently, calls for greater transparency have encouraged a number of jewelers to offer a behind-the-scenes look at their operations. These immersive experiences include excursions to remote diamond and sapphire mines, visits to exclusive design ateliers, and classes that provide a deeper understanding of the world's most exquisite jewelry. Designed for collectors as well as curiosity seekers, opportunities to explore the jewelry trade from an insider's perspective help shed light on the circuitous journey that our most prized possessions take from mine to market, not to mention the myriad people whose hands have touched them before our own.



From top: A L'École Van Cleef & Arpels classroom in Paris; a pearl extraction at Arabian Pearl Holdings' farm in Ras al-Khaimah; and a 15.22-carat yellow Exceptional Diamond from Forevermark in stages of cutting.



Forevermark Diamond Journey

Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Canada

Diamonds from Forevermark, a brand owned by the De Beers Group of Companies, come from mines that comply with strict political, social, and environmental requirements; each stone bears a unique inscription tracing it back to its source. In 2013, a 25-carat rough diamond from Forevermark was offered in the Neiman Marcus holiday catalog, along with a trip to Namibia to visit the mine where it was

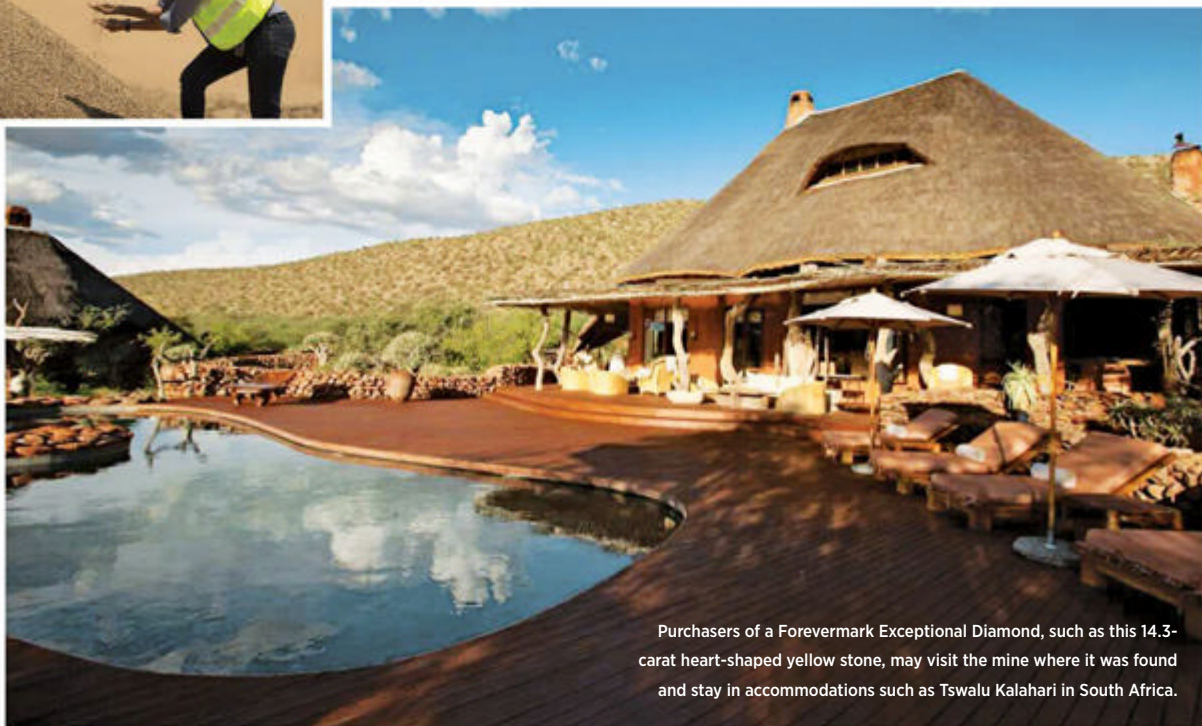
unearthed. The \$1.85 million gift was such a hit—it sold—that Forevermark has turned it into an ongoing program.

Now clients who buy one of the brand's top Exceptional Diamonds—stones distinguished by their color, clarity, and size—are given the opportunity to visit the mine where their stone originated, be it in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, or Canada. These stones are typically above 5 carats and are sold through authorized retailers such as London Jewelers in Manhasset, N.Y., and R.F. Moeller in Minneapolis. Prices start around \$250,000, though the gems often sell for much more—a vivid yellow heart-shaped

Exceptional Diamond of 14.3 carats is being offered for about \$1.9 million.

The diamond-mine trips are custom designed and priced for each client, and they boast a high degree of exclusivity. For example, obtaining government permission to board the ship that mines diamonds off the coast of Namibia usually takes at least three months—and until now was only available to members of the diamond trade. “It’s a fast-track process that De Beers will manage,” says Adelaide Polk-Bauman, a Forevermark spokeswoman. “You would never have access to it unless you were in the industry.”

forevermark.com, 203.388.3550



Purchasers of a Forevermark Exceptional Diamond, such as this 14.3-carat heart-shaped yellow stone, may visit the mine where it was found and stay in accommodations such as Tswalu Kalahari in South Africa.



L'École Van Cleef & Arpels

Paris and New York City

Three years ago, the Parisian jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels opened L'École Van Cleef & Arpels, a jewelry school available to the public. Inside a stately 18th-century townhouse on Place Vendôme, the house's gemologists, historians, watchmakers, and master jewelers teach a curriculum aimed at developing a discerning eye for jewels. "Its ambition is to encourage the intellectual and emotional grasp of the 'soul' of jewelry," says Marie Vallanet-Delhom, president of L'École, "and to convey skill through personal experience."

From June 4 to 18, L'École will take its show on the road to New York City, where 12 courses limited to 12 participants each will be offered at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Classes are divided into three categories. *Savoir Faire* (a heading L'École describes as the skills passed from generation to

generation) includes classes on each step of jewelry making and the intricacies of a mechanical watch. *Universe of Gemstones* courses will cover evaluating diamonds and other gems. And the *Art History of Jewelry* curriculum delves into topics such as how humans developed ways to measure time, the symbolism of jewelry, and art-nouveau jewelry.

Each course (tuition starts at \$360) includes hands-on components such as making a piece of jewelry from design to mock-up. Students also will learn about the house's historical innovations, like the Mystery Set. Perfected in 1933, the groundbreaking setting secures gems along a metal grid beneath the stones, producing a seamlessly gem-encrusted surface that can be fashioned into three-dimensional shapes.

lecolevancliefertarpels.com, +33.1.7070.3600



Classes at L'École Van Cleef & Arpels cover a broad range of topics, including the history of jewelry, stone evaluation, and the techniques behind pieces such as this butterfly clip (above).

An afternoon on the Ras al-Khaimah pearl farm will cover every phase of pearl culturing. Some of these Arabian pearls will be used in a new one-off jewelry collection that will include Stephen Webster's pearl-diamond-and-emerald bracelet (bottom).



Arabian Pearl Holdings Farm Visit Ras al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

Before Kokichi Mikimoto, a young Japanese entrepreneur, invented a method to culture pearls in 1893, the world's most sought-after specimens came from the Persian Gulf. Over time, however, the region stopped producing natural pearls and the pearl industry looked to culturing operations in Australia, China, Japan, and Tahiti to meet the demand for the organic gems.

Now Arabian Pearl Holdings, a new brand based in Dubai, is trying to revive the mystique of the Arabian pearl. At its farm in Ras al-Khaimah, an emirate about 80 miles north of Dubai, the company cultures pearls with silvery and Champagne hues inside the *Pinctada radiata* oyster. To help promote the fledgling industry, Arabian Pearl Holdings hosts individuals and groups for \$200 half-day visits at the farm, where they have the opportunity to cruise through the surrounding

mangroves on a traditional dhow, learn the history of pearl diving, and watch a culturing operation and shelling demonstration (and keep the resulting pearl). "A lot of people don't understand how many years go into creating a pearl, from picking the oysters from the seabed, to implantation, to sorting," says Matt Sawaqed, Arabian Pearl Holdings' CEO, of the two- to five-year process. "It makes you appreciate the end product when you realize how long it takes to grow."

The company also has partnered with designers such as Mouawad and Deborah Pagoni on a one-off jewelry collection debuting this fall. The line will include a \$69,000 tassel bracelet by Stephen Webster made with 18-karat white gold, black and white diamonds, emeralds, and, of course, Arabian and Tahitian pearls.

arabianpearl.com, info@arabianpearlholdings.com



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Colored Gemstone Mine Tours

Colombo, Sri Lanka; and Jaipur, India

In May, the International Colored Gemstone Association, a nonprofit organization that unites miners, cutters, dealers, and retailers in the promotion of colored stones, holds its 16th biennial congress in Colombo, Sri Lanka, a hub of the sapphire trade. While the conference is aimed at professionals in the gem business—think distribution challenges and lab treatments—afterward, the group will lead a tour of the island nation's legendary sapphire mines and other noteworthy gem locations. The tour—May 20 to 26, also open to interested consumers—costs \$1,950 per person, including hotels, bus transportation, and meals.



Highlights include stops at the Ratnapura and Elahera gem fields, where green rice paddies blanket dozens of small pitting operations that have yielded some

of the finest sapphires in the world, and the gem markets of Ratnapura and Beruwala. “You see how the miners dig the sapphires up, how much earth has to be moved, and how little you get,” says the association’s president, Benjamin Hackman. “You appreciate the amount of work that goes into getting whatever is available out to the market—so you understand it is not as easy as it seems.” Participants should be on the lookout for a coveted variety of sapphire known as a padparadscha. Named after the Sinhalese word for “lotus blossom,” the orangey-pink gem is often compared to a tropical sunset, and a fine 10-carat specimen can cost \$1 million. The itinerary also includes the sacred city of Kandy, the Nuwara Eliya tea gardens, and the golden temple at Dambulla.

The 2017 congress will take place in Jaipur, India, and will likely include a tour of the Pink City's myriad gem-cutting workshops and the hilltop Amer Fort.

congress.gemstone.org, 212.620.0900

In May, jewelry enthusiasts will visit the mines outside Ratnapura, Sri Lanka (top left and right), a source for exceptional sapphires, as part of a trip organized by the International Colored Gemstone Association.



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Jewels of London Tour London

The United Kingdom's capital is home to scores of talented jewelers who are pushing the boundaries of contemporary design, thanks in no small part to their rich inheritance: a centuries-old jewelry legacy that Christie's Travel is helping enthusiasts explore. Christie's Travel, a collaboration between the auction house and

the travel outfitter Abercrombie & Kent, has assigned David Warren, senior international director of jewelry, to lead the Jewels of London tour from June 1 to 4.

Highlights include a private viewing of the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London, a curated talk in the Victoria & Albert Museum's jewelry gallery, and a

walking tour of Bond Street with stops at the antique and modern silver dealer S.J. Phillips and the famed Fabergé dealer Wartski. The Wartski salon offers some particularly exceptional shopping, with antique jewels and objets d'art from Carl Fabergé's St. Petersburg workshop, such as an aquamarine-and-diamond pendant surrounded by a frame of platinum scrolls, which can be had for less than \$100,000, and a 15th-century gold poesy ring engraved with an expression of love and fidelity for \$3,000.

The four-day experience includes dinner in the Christie's boardroom. Before the event, women will be asked "to not wear any jewelry," Warren says. "We will have jewels from one of our upcoming sales decorating the table and we will let them pick off anything they like—huge Colombian emerald earrings, 50 carats each—to wear for the evening."

christiestravel.com, +44.207.389.2830

The Jewels of London tour by Christie's Travel will be led by the auction house's director of jewelry, David Warren (shown top right, evaluating a 379-carat Colombian emerald), and will feature noteworthy jewel collections and a dinner at the historic Christie's offices in London (left).



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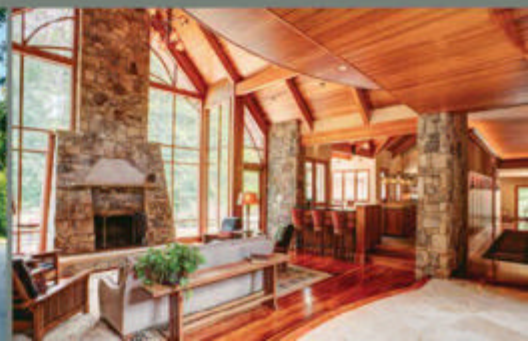
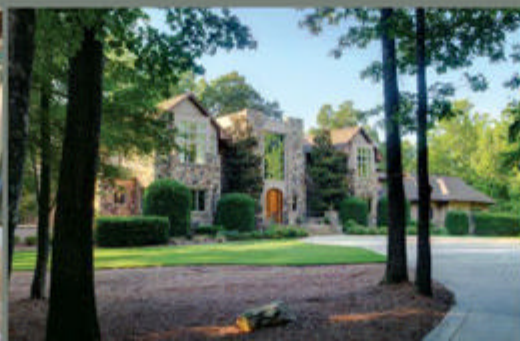


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Oceanfront Estate—Completion March, 2015

Hillsboro Shores, Fl

Direct Oceanfront, New Construction by award-winning Bomar Builders. Over 14,000 sq ft. Bermuda-inspired, island estate with 5 bedrooms, family/club room, luxurious master suite and gourmet kitchen with breakfast area, all with fabulous ocean views. Over 3,000 sq ft of outdoor entertainment areas with loggias on all levels. Six-car garage and capacity for more. Two-tiered, cascading pool. This is truly year-round living, indoors and out. Just minutes from Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale. Offered at \$8,950,000.



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Ft Lauderdale, Fl

225' Deepwater on New River plus a slipway for another 70' yacht! Megayacht dockage here. 1.3 acres. Private, gated, secluded estate. Gorgeous main house with open floor plan, marble floors, wet bar and so much more, with walls of glass overlooking the river and lush tropical grounds with mature trees. 2 guesthouses complement this compound, so you have plenty of room for family and friends, too. Located just 10 minutes from downtown and beaches. Asking \$7,750,000.

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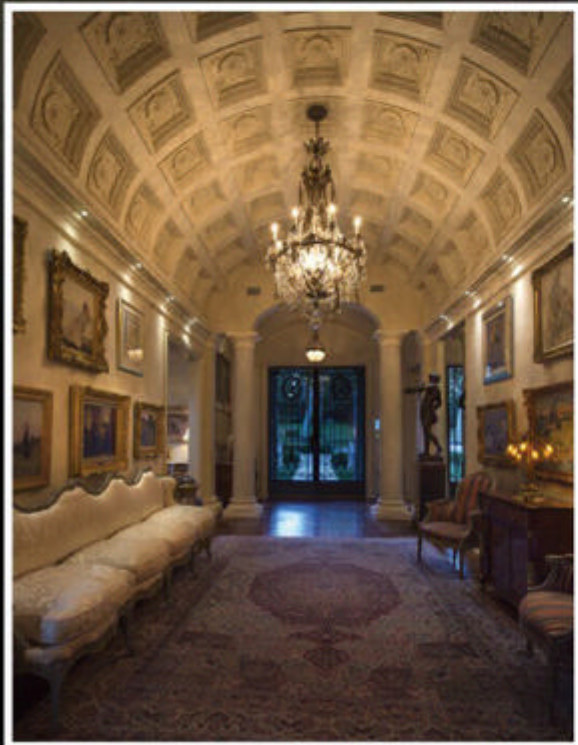
Exclusive. Just completed, this superbly designed home is the newest masterpiece by Robert Schwagerl LLC and has been built to the highest standards and is LEED for Home certified. Screened porch, 48' pool, pergola, spa and pool house. 7 bedrooms, 9.5 baths, 5 fireplaces. \$9,595,000. WEB# 43190. Jeannette Schwagerl ■ direct: 631.267.7113 ■ jschwagerl@bhshamptons.com

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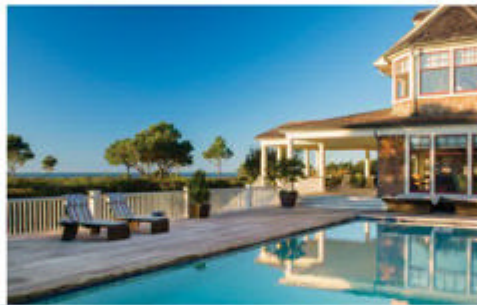
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181 BALLYBUNION DRIVE

Price: \$24,500,000 | Sq Ft: 9,777 | View: Ocean Front
Bedrooms: 6 | Bathrooms: 7 1/2

The only private oceanfront estate on Kiawah Island designed by world-renowned architect Robert A.M. Stern, this classic seaside home with guest house is living testament to ingenious design, master craftsmanship, and attention to detail. Atop 3.03 acres with 263 feet of stunning oceanfront, the home's interiors have been completely reinvigorated to impart effortless luxury and a warmth of scale required of a peaceful family enclave. Outside, more than 5,000 square feet of Brazilian ipe decking and sumptuous verandas wrap around the entire home, oceanfront pool and spa—all elegantly understated, perfectly private, and close enough to see the glistening ocean, smell the salt sea air, hear the waves and sea birds, and feel Atlantic breezes. The interior aesthetic celebrates Stern's immaculate structural vision while paying an airy, light-filled homage to the sea. A Kiawah Island Club Membership is available with this property.



49 RIVER MARSH LANE

Price: \$3,995,000 | Sq Ft: 5,438 | View: Marsh/River
Bedrooms: 5 | Bathrooms: 5 1/2

Surrounded by an abundance of towering oaks, pines, and palmettos, 49 River Marsh Lane was designed to take maximum advantage of the river and marsh views. The property's landscape has been awarded the Kiawah Island Conservancy's highest award, the Gold Sweetgrass Award and boasts a multitude of native plants and natural vegetation enhancing the home's entrance. Exquisite finishes, including marble, limestone, and hardwood floors, are found throughout the home. The great room has a wood-burning fireplace with granite surround with built-in cabinets on each side and opens onto a sizable, porcelain-tiled deck and the spacious screened porch. Further adding to its appeal, 49 River Marsh Lane features a private, deepwater dock and stunning views of the Kiawah River. This home is available with a Social Membership to the private Kiawah Island Club.



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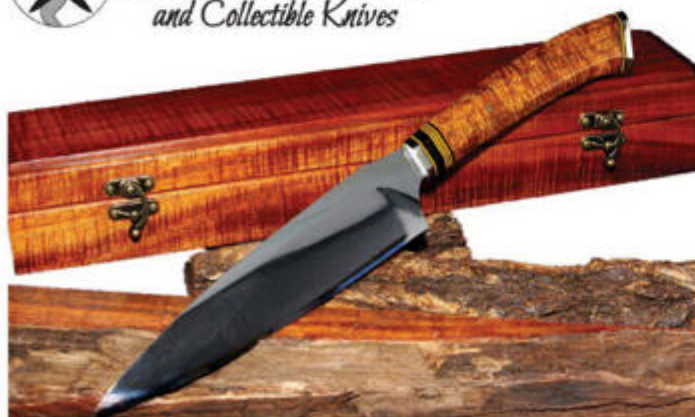


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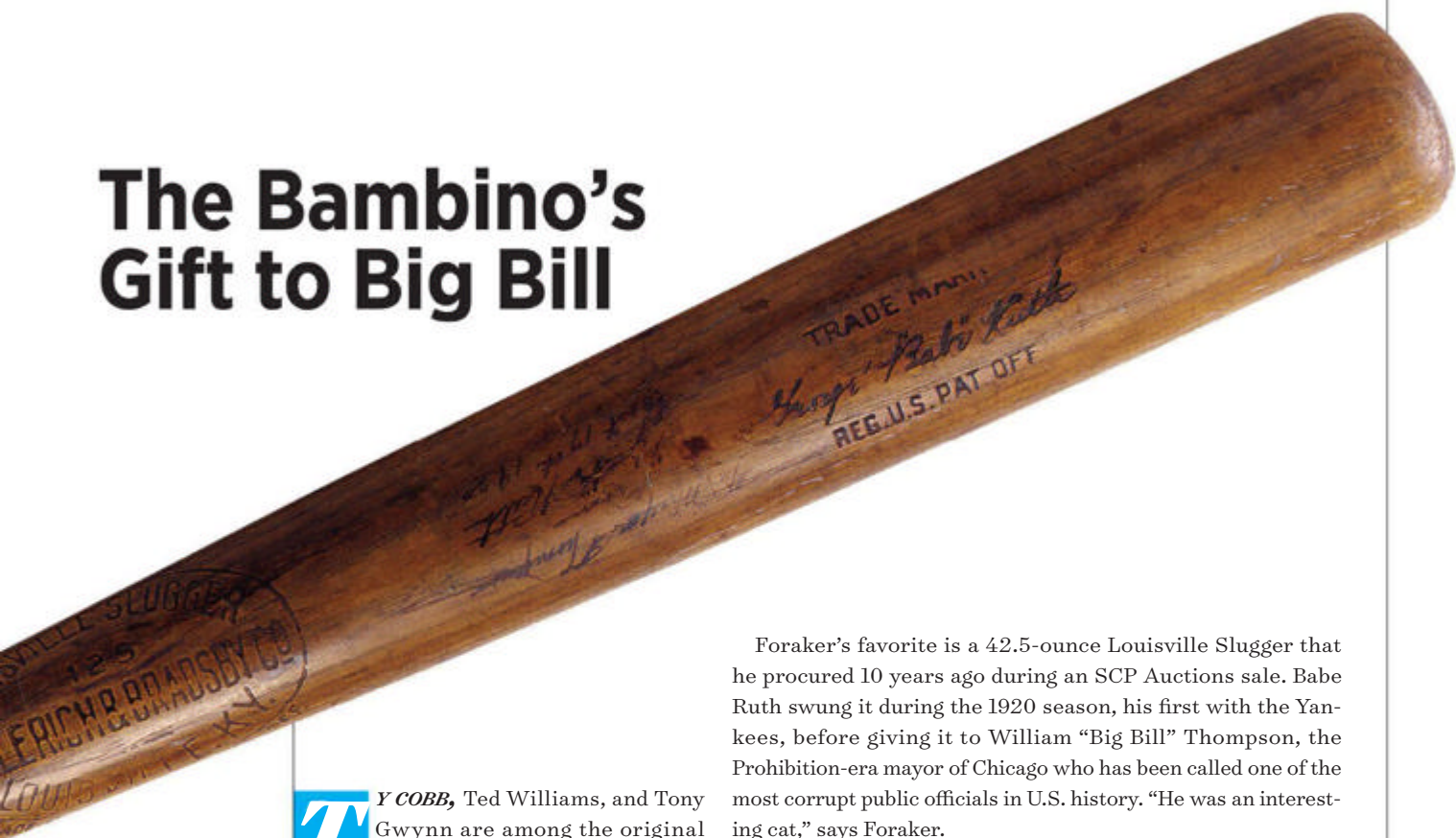
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The Bambino's Gift to Big Bill



TY COBB, Ted Williams, and Tony Gwynn are among the original owners of the 80 or so bats in Scott Foraker's baseball memorabilia collection. A lifelong Yankees fan who grew up in northern New Jersey before relocating to California, Foraker also has bats that once belonged to Lou Gehrig and Mickey Mantle. He turned his attention to bats in the early 1990s, after he had acquired most of the trading cards that he wanted. "Bats bring you closer to the game," says Foraker, who is a vice president for Amgen, a biotechnology company based in Thousand Oaks, Calif. "They're the tools of the trade."

Foraker's favorite is a 42.5-ounce Louisville Slugger that he procured 10 years ago during an SCP Auctions sale. Babe Ruth swung it during the 1920 season, his first with the Yankees, before giving it to William "Big Bill" Thompson, the Prohibition-era mayor of Chicago who has been called one of the most corrupt public officials in U.S. history. "He was an interesting cat," says Foraker.

Toward the end of the season, the Yankees were in Chicago for a series with the White Sox, and the mayor wanted a photo op with Ruth, so he invited him to his office. Ruth obliged and surprised Big Bill with the bat, which bears the inscription, "To Mayor Thompson, From Babe Ruth, September 17, 1920." Foraker also has a photo of Ruth presenting the bat to the mayor. "It may be the only Ruth bat in the world with a photograph documenting its provenance," he says.

Judging from the bat's extensive wear, Ruth used it to hit at least some of his 54 home runs that season, when he shattered the record of 29 he had set a year earlier with the Red Sox. "Ruth was beginning to transform baseball that first year with the Yankees," says Foraker. "He hit more home runs that season than some entire teams did. He was becoming a big deal." —LARRY BEAN

"Ruth was beginning to transform baseball that first year with the Yankees." —SCOTT FORAKER

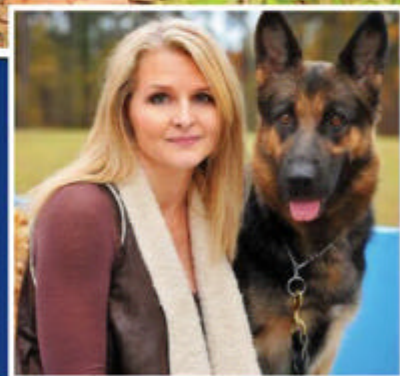


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A black and white photograph of Roger Federer in a tuxedo, smiling slightly, standing next to a Jura IMPRESSA Z9 coffee machine. The machine is dispensing a latte macchiato into a glass. The background is dark with some stage lights visible.

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